

WOMEN AND RELIGION

*A Resolution on the relationship between religion and sexism,
by the Unitarian Universalist Association*

With an Introduction by

UUA Minister for Women and Religion Leslie Arden Westbrook



WOMEN AND RELIGION

WHEREAS, a principle of the Unitarian Universalist Association is to "affirm, defend, and promote the supreme worth and dignity of every human personality, and the use of the democratic method in human relationships"; and

WHEREAS, great strides have been taken to affirm this principle within our denomination; and

WHEREAS, some models of human relationships arising from religious myths, historical materials, and other teachings still create and perpetuate attitudes that cause women everywhere to be overlooked and undervalued; and

WHEREAS, children, youth and adults internalize and act on these cultural models, thereby tending to limit their sense of self-worth and dignity;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1977 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls upon all Unitarian Universalists to examine carefully their own religious beliefs and the extent to which these beliefs influence sex-role stereotypes within their own families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly urges the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association to encourage the Unitarian Universalist Association administrative officers and staff, the religious leaders within societies, the Unitarian Universalist theological schools, the directors of related organizations, and the planners of seminars and conferences, to make every effort to: (a) put traditional assumptions and language in perspective, and (b) avoid sexist assumptions and language in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly urges the President of the Unitarian Universalist Association to send copies of this resolution to other denominations examining sexism inherent in religious literature and institutions and to the International Association of Liberal Religious Women and the IARF (International Association for Religious Freedom); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly requests the Unitarian Universalist Association (a) to join with those who are encouraging others in the society to examine the relationship between religious and cultural attitudes toward women, and (b) to send a representative and resource materials to associations appropriate to furthering the above goals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly requests the President of the UUA to report annually on progress in implementing this resolution.

The above resolution was passed unanimously.

Ithaca, NY 1977

INTRODUCTION

The 1977 General Assembly WOMEN AND RELIGION Resolution asks all Unitarian Universalists to look at the ways our religious beliefs cause us to undervalue and overlook women. It asks us to look at the relationship between our religion and sexism. It asks us both to look at our interpersonal behavior in our families, friendships and work, and to examine the programs and policies of the religious institution of which we are a part, in order to determine the degree that sexist attitudes shape our lives together. It asks us, as Unitarian Universalists, to 'clean house.'

The WOMEN AND RELIGION Resolution is radical, in the original sense of the word, for it is designed to help us 'remove the root of a disease,' i.e. sexism. It asks us simultaneously to remember the root cause of our being together as religious liberals: 'to affirm, defend and promote the supreme worth and dignity of every human personality, and the use of the democratic method in human relationships.' It asks us to return to our Religious Dream.

Grassroots in its evolution, the resolution was conceived by a small working group of UU women in Lexington, Massachusetts, submitted as a resolution to the 1977 General Assembly by 548 members of 57 active member societies, and promoted vigorously by the UU Women's Federation. Now, the UUA is sponsoring a three year effort to implement it. Because of the resolution's importance, this work is sponsored directly by the Office of the President.

The late President Paul N. Carnes took an important step toward providing the leadership so necessary if we are to begin to challenge sexism within our denomination when he said that the resolution "recognizes that the elimination of sexism is both an *individual* and an *institutional*, a *spiritual* as well as *socio-economic*, problem . . . [and that it] . . . recognizes the relationship between power structures and language and mythology."

Implementation of the WOMEN AND RELIGION Resolution will, therefore, require the effort of us all: lay people, churches and societies, professional religious leaders, UU affiliated organizations, UUA administration, staff, board of trustees, and districts. In 1977 recommendations for ways the UUA can implement the resolution were developed by task forces across the continent. Since then, a continental committee has been providing continuing leadership, as the particular programs have evolved. Great numbers of men and women are working on those specific recommendations and programs.

If you believe there is a direct relationship between historical religious mythology and the ways we view and treat women, we invite you to be a part of the implementation of the WOMEN AND RELIGION resolution.

The Rev. Leslie Arden Westbrook
UUA MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND RELIGION



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1977 GENERAL ASSEMBLY WOMEN AND RELIGION RESOLUTION

Ministry and Leadership

1. (A) **Implementation of the Women and Religion Resolution should be promoted by the UUA President, Staff, Board of Trustees, District leadership and leadership in local societies.** The UUA President should report annually to the General Assembly on the status of implementation efforts. The President's report should be made verbally and in written form. During this report, time should be protected for an opportunity for questions and input from delegates. An orderly, methodical, long-range program should be designed in order to implement the resolution at all levels of our denominational structure.
- (B) **A person should be appointed at the UUA to serve as consultant and coordinator of the work of implementation.** General Assembly workshops, District conferences, and local church programs should focus on the resolution. At District annual meetings the resolution should be considered and voted upon. Conferences on the topic should, at times, be interdenominational.
- (C) **Commission on WOMEN AND RELIGION** should be appointed and given the authority to appraise and facilitate the actual implementation of the Resolution. The Commission should be formed with the broadest representation of members: by geography, affiliation, age, sex and philosophical perspective. Appropriate funds should be granted to facilitate this work.
2. **An Affirmative Action Program for women ministers and women theological students should be developed by the UUA and the UU theological schools.** Specific suggestions include: a 'circuit riding female minister' to give leadership and role-exposure to lay-led fellowships; the encouragement of women speakers for local parishes and district meetings; continued participation of the UUA in the National Council of Churches Commission on Women in Ministry; a 'roving program' on the Women and Religion resolution for use by societies; and the encouragement of societies by the UUA Section of Ministry to consider women candidates.
3. **Conferences for settled women ministers, for women theological students, and for women lay leaders should be developed, supported and encouraged.** Such conferences should address the issues of power, success and effectiveness, money management, volunteerism, and other women's issues.



4. **Male ministers, members of the UUMA and LREDA, and male students being interviewed by the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee and Accreditation Committee should be educated about the relationships between religious myths and sexual stereotypes and the deleterious effects of sexist language.** They should be educated on women's issues and the work in theology being done by women. Women's sermons should be distributed. A question on the record sheet of every minister which is distributed to churches searching for ministers should ask ministers to focus on the substance of the resolution.
5. **The President should contact all UUA department heads, UUA committees and affiliated UU organizations and ask them to report what their plans are to implement the Resolution. Their response should be published in the UU WORLD.**
The Collegium, Beacon Press, the UUSC, and all other affiliated and associated UU organizations should be apprised of the importance of the Resolution and asked to focus some of their work on the substance of the Resolution.
6. **The UUA should appoint a staff using affirmative action guidelines.** Such a program should attempt to eliminate job stereotyping and seek to avoid placing women primarily in jobs backed by 'soft money'. In particular, pictures of the UUA staff, UUSC staff, etc. should be included in the UU WORLD to indicate the effectiveness of each organization's affirmative action program. All UUA salaries as they appear in the UUA budget should be broken down into individual salaries.
7. **UU theological schools, in their curriculum, faculty and structure, should reflect the increasing number of female students, their interests, their talents and their perspectives.** Seminars for male and female students should be designed which prepare them to minister adequately to the needs and concerns of women. UUA financial aid to theological students and schools should be granted only after a 'Title 9' review has occurred at the school.
8. **All materials distributed through the UUA Section of the Ministry should be revised to reflect the changing population of our ministry.** In particular, the Ordination Manual should reflect the fact that women as well as men are part of the liberal ministry.

Education and Program

1. **Educational materials for children, youth, and adults, (including teachers and parents) should be developed.** Such materials should
 - *explore the relationships between religious myths and sexism;
 - *examine the deleterious effects of sexist language;
 - *explore the role of women in religion since pre-cultural times;
 - *tell the stories of outstanding women in our movement;
 - *promote nontraditional role models for men and women;
 - *celebrate personhood.
 These materials should be developed for men's groups, women's groups,

mixed groups in our churches. Materials already developed should be revised to bring them into line with the philosophy and intent of the resolution. A 'Great Book' discussion program should be developed which uses Beacon books on the subject of women and religion.

2. **A Clearinghouse on Women and Religion should be established.** The Clearinghouse should compile resources such as sermons, discussion guides and program manuals from local societies and UUA organizations such as Beacon Press, the UUWF, etc. Other projects of the Clearinghouse should be: a non-sexist liturgical resource directory; profiles of women ministers; information on courses in religion and women's affairs; a UU women's professional talent bank; and a Women and Religion Packet.
3. **The UU WORLD should carry stories and educational articles on the Women and Religion program.** In particular, the WORLD should:
 - *carry a large article and educational questionnaire for use by UU churches, societies, families and individuals which would assess the role of women in the leadership of our societies and encourage nontraditional roles for society members;
 - *include a regular column entitled "Women's Interfaith Issues";
 - *carry the President's General Assembly report on implementation of the resolution.All stories, worship resources, etc. in the WORLD should be edited so that sexist assumptions and language are deleted or changed.
4. **A new degenderized Hymnbook should be developed.** It should include non-sexist language and fresh material that is written by and for women. Local parishes should contribute work on this project by sending materials to the Commission on Common Worship, established by the President. In the meantime, the Worship Arts Clearinghouse should distribute its list of non-sexist hymns.
5. **Materials previously distributed by the Worship Arts Clearinghouse should be degenderized and new materials developed should be sensitive to the issue of language and sexism.** In particular, worship materials for 'families' should be developed.
6. **The UUA should design educational programs on the Women and Religion Resolution which will reach individuals and groups outside our denomination.** Such efforts should include:
 - *public service television spots with the target audience women;
 - *letters to other denominations, institutions and coalition groups informing them of the substance of the resolution;
 - *dialogue and work with feminists of other groups in order to further examine the relationship between religious and cultural attitudes toward women.
7. **Materials on sexuality should be developed and collected, including the acceptance and celebration of women's sexuality as a part of human experience.** This material should include such subjects as the reproductive cycle, sexual preferences, and sexual behavior.

1977-78 WOMEN AND RELIGION TASK FORCE CONVENORS

Drucilla Cummins, Edina, MN

Billie Drew, Lexington, MA

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Rosemary Matson, Berkeley, CA

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Joan Mendelsohn, Chicago, IL

Janet Osborn, Port Washington, NY

Bea Robbins, Silver Spring, MD

Jody Schilling, Berkeley, CA

WOMEN AND RELIGION

An Introductory Reading List

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Boulding, Elise. *The Underside of History: A View of Women Through Time*. 1976 Westview Press \$24.75 An essential corrective for a distorted one-dimensional view of history.

Janeway, Elizabeth. *Man's World, Woman's Place*. 1971 Delta \$2.65 Paper. A Study of Social Mythology.

Miller, Jean B. *Towards a New Psychology of Women*. 1976 Beacon Press \$9.95.

Myths Women Live By. Kyriokos. A Journal of the Unitarian Universalists Women's Federation. Vol. 1, No. 3, UU World Supplement, June 15, 1977.

WOMEN AND RELIGION

Annual Journal of the Universalist Historical Society. "Olympia Brown," V. (1963) A special issue devoted to Olympia Brown, the first woman ordained to the Universalist ministry (1863).

A Study Action Guide for Women. Women's Caravan, 67 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116 \$3.50. A collection of articles for workshop and discussion groups.

Collins, Sheila. *A Different Heaven and Earth*. Judson press \$8.95. An overview of Women's Studies in Religion.

Daly, Mary. *Beyond God The Father*. 1973 Beacon Press \$3.95 Paper. Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation.

Daly, Mary. *Gyn/Ecology*. 1978 Beacon Press. Another groundbreaking statement by one of the foremost feminist theologians of our time.

Doely, Sarah Bentley. *Women's Liberation and the Church*. N.Y. Association, 1970. Essays highlighting the role of women in the church.

Fuller, Margaret. *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1971 Paperback \$2.25. The first feminist book published in America in 1855 by Margaret Fuller, leading Unitarian Transcendentalist.

Hageman, Alice L., Ed., in collaboration with The Women's Caucus of Harvard Divinity School. *Sexist Religion and Women in the Church: No More Silence!* New York: Association Press, 1974. A dozen essays by various authors. Paperback \$5.95.

Hitchings, Catherine F. "Universalist and Unitarian Women Ministers," *The Journal of the Universalist Historical Society*, (1975). A biographical dictionary.

Hunter, Edith F. *Sophia Lyon Fahs: A Biography*. Boston: Beacon Press 1966. \$5.95. Pioneer in liberal religious education.

Neuman, Erich. *The Great Mother*. Princeton, 1955. The history and meaning of the Female Goddess figure.

Ochs, Carol. *Behind the Sex of God*. 1977 Beacon Press \$9.95.

Patai, Raphael. *The Hebrew Goddess*. 1978 Avon Books Paper \$2.95.

Reuther, Rosemary. *Religion and Sexism: Images of Women in Jewish and Christian Traditions*. 1974 Simon and Schuster \$3.95 Paper. Eleven theologians treat the subject of women as seen by theology.

Reuther, Rosemary and Eugene Bianchi. *From Machismo to Mutuality*. Paulist Press, 1976.

Russell, Letty M. *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective—A Theology*. 1974. Westminster Press \$3.95 Paper. A contribution to theology of human liberation—written out of a specific involvement and a conscious engagement in the liberation of women.

The Woman's Bible. 1974. \$6.95. *A Study Guide to the Woman's Bible*. 1975. \$3.50. Coalition Task Force on Women and Religion, 4759-15th Ave. N.E., Seattle, Washington 98105. Reissue of two volumes (in one) of the commentaries on parts of the Bible published by a women's "revising committee" in 1890's. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Unitarian and feminist, was a member of the committee.

SIGNS. Journal of Women in Culture and Society. Winter 1976. Volume 2, Number 2. University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Ave., Chicago, IL 60637 \$4.00 Special section on Women and Religion.

Stone, Merlin. *When God Was a Woman*. 1976 Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch Paper \$3.95. Stimulating and controversial.

Thompson, Mary Lou, Ed. *Voices of the New Feminism*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1978. Available in paperback. Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation.

FICTION

Atwood, Margaret. *Surfacing*, 1972. Simon and Schuster. Reviewed in *SIGNS* (see above)—Volume 2 Number 2—as an example of a woman's spiritual quest novel.

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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMEN'S FEDERATION
25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108

The aim of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation is to encourage women to develop their full potential and to participate effectively in the church, fellowship, and denomination. It seeks to uphold and extend the philosophy of liberal religion, emphasizing "the church as a caring community." Its program focus for the 1977-79 biennium is "Ministry To, For, By and Among women."

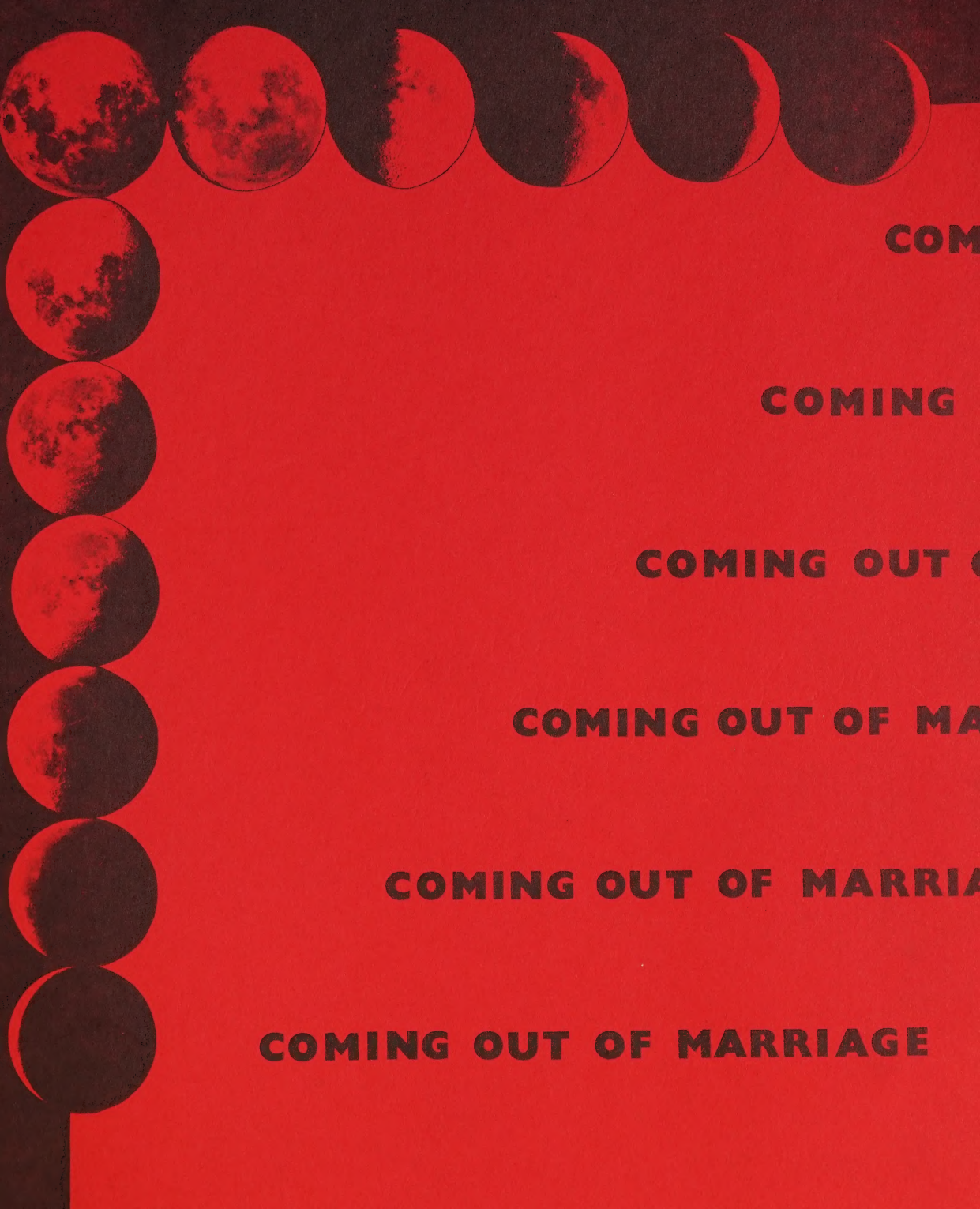
The UUWF works for human rights for all, with particular concern for the rights of women. It participates in programs and action for quality child care centers, peace, and prison reform. It supports volunteer advocates for responsible abortion laws, for older and displaced women, and for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. It also has volunteer representatives in Washington, D.C., and at the United Nations.

The Federation ministers to its members on a personal level with programs of leadership training, group explorations of values and societal stereotypes of women, intergenerational communications, and a concern for the older women. On many of these subjects, program materials appropriate for working with groups are available, among them "Being Our Age and Learning to Like It," designed to raise the consciousness of middle-aged and older women to their rights and opportunities; "Growing Up Human," a packet exploring the extent to which children's literature, toys and the media contribute to sex-role stereotyping; "Images of Women in TV," a participatory program concept involving women of all ages in a look at and report on the sex-role stereotyping of women in TV commercials in their local communities; "Focus on Values and Goals," a discussion guide to help explore contemporary value systems; and "UU Women and Their Church," a packet designed to raise awareness of the role of women in the denomination. Voices of the New Feminism, edited by Mary Lou Thompson, sponsored by the UUWF and published by Beacon Press, has been much in demand in womens' studies courses.

The UUWF Ministry to Women Award is presented annually at the General Assembly, where the Federation also sponsors program sessions of interest to women. Other UUWF services include the *Federation Newsletter*, mailed five times a year to all units and individual members, and *Kyriakos*, a contributor-written publication, sent out four times a year with the *UU World*. The Federation also provides seed grants for projects sponsored by individual UU women or groups in churches or fellowships, and program loans for regional conferences.

On property near Worcester, MA, the UUWF operates the Clara Barton Camp for Girls with Diabetes; and maintains the Clara Barton Birthplace Museum, listed in the National Register of Historic Places and open to the public, and a Conference Center that can accommodate groups of up to 35.

The UUWF was formed in 1963 by a merger of Unitarian and Universalist women's organizations, and is made up of 300 units in local churches and fellowships and 550 individual members. A 12 woman board, elected by the constituency every two years, is responsible for carrying out policy determined by biennial UUWF conventions.



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by

Emily Culpepper, Hazel Staats Meyners, Diane Miller

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Hazel Staats Meyners, Diane Miller
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Printed by New England Free Press.
Somerville, Massachusetts

Reprinted 1976

Distributed through:
Coming Out of Marriage Booklet
c/o Office of Women's Programs
45 Francis Avenue
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

(See facing page for how to order)

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Introduction: Who We Are

These materials have been put together by three women out of a larger group of women who had gotten together in an attempt to describe and define our experiences in coming out of marriage. We came together out of our need and desire to share our experiences with other women who were somewhere in the process of their marriage ending. We were not sure what we would find or how much we could share with each other. Even though we came from different situations and are going different directions, we found that what we were passing through was remarkably alike.

As we talked we found that the group helped us meet needs that were important in our new living and that we had not found being met elsewhere. We came to feel that making available written material about our experience might facilitate that process for others. We three chose to put together a collection of several short articles in order to utilize different styles and forms to express emotion and to articulate our ideas as well as to convey basic information. The booklet offers a variety of resources, some of which may be more useful to you than others, depending on your particular situation.

We think it is important to indicate what informs our perspective. We are all white, have varied access to middle-class resources, have had counseling experience and some teaching experience. At the time of writing this packet we are involved in theological education. We differ in styles, circumstances of our marriages, families, and divorces. We are from different parts of the country. The ages in our group ranged from 24 to 49.

We are aware of our female socialization and our orientation reflects this. We have many questions about how men experience divorce and coming out of marriage and what relationship their experiences have to ours.

We are writing about divorce and coming out of marriage from the inside out rather than as objective observers of divorce. The booklet might be helpful for use in a group such as ours, but could also be helpful for women individually, for women who might seek other resources, and for men.

We welcome your responses to this booklet.

Emily Erwin Culpepper
Hazel Staats Meyners
Diane Marie Wynne Miller

THIS BOOKLET IS FOR USE IN WHATEVER WAY YOU FIND USEFUL

The Strength to Hold On

In all major crises, of which divorce is certainly one, the maintenance of the feeling of one's worth and belief in one's own human dignity becomes of greatest importance. It is a time when the highest possibility for destruction holds in it also the most creative potentiality for growth. To keep our existence focused on the positive possibilities requires a great deal of centering on the capacities for renewal.

To be involved in re-evaluating and re-assessing one's own being requires the ability to look openly, and from a perspective which allows some objectivity, at the relationships in one's total environment. Because of the fallibility of human existence, this becomes a difficult and humbling experience. Through the distraughtness of rejection and disturbance must come some order and sense of quietness. This search requires great patience and forbearance and is helped immeasurably by the support of some kind of community.....

THE STRENGTH TO

HOLD ON —

**Where does IT
come from ?**

We lead out -

We walk -

**We are the beginning
of what is before us -**

The values that we reach for

Seek and ye shall find -

**Believe and your faith will be
restored -**

the HOPE

This article presents some key stages in the divorce/coming-out-of-marriage experience for us as women. The place to begin is in the middle. We found as we opened up and talked with each other that we as individuals had all reached a point of realizing that our efforts to cope with and understand our changing situation were a struggle for survival. This realization was painful, fought for, fought against, intense, dramatic, amazing. In our particular group, we have and had many differences - age, background, length of marriage, types of relationships and problems, fears and hopes - but to our surprise, we all had had to reach this ROCK-BOTTOM point. Seeing that we were (and are) struggling for our lives was terrifying and essential. We start by telling you this because it reveals the depth of our experiences - the context within which our efforts and feelings must be understood, the level on which we were living and having to learn to live and make decisions.

Each of us had a specific point at which we identified this realization occurring and COMING TO BE in us. We all had lived it as a DYING - we were filled with death images and ideas and fears - about ourselves, our spouses, others, the relationship.

"I curled up in bed and didn't come out for three days. I was COMFORTING MYSELF; I was working at surviving dying." *

"I went to the hospital, to the emergency room. I thought I might 'GO OUT'; I had to find some way to get up and continue.... that was my 'bottom'."

"I went deep inside and tried to find whether I could find some way to keep alive in all this pain."

"I literally crawled to the phone. I knew I had to make this effort NOW or it would be too late. I might really go beyond help, but I had to do that."

Suicide was a possibility, but the real death-fear was the fear that we might succumb to the PAIN AND SUFFERING in such a way as to be permanently damaged as whole people - that we might become a kind of walking dead. Keeping this in mind, let us tell you what we experienced and how we each came to survive this death - not that the struggle or pain is all gone; it isn't; but we are now on our way in our lives from this point, rather than still on our way into it.

Elements of the Struggle

Our own society's IMAGES OF DIVORCE were a major weight and difficulty. We had all had different previous experiences concerning divorce, ranging from a little to a lot, positive to negative, simple to complex. But, we found to our dismay as we began to try to think of ourselves and divorce that our deepest emotional images were strongly negative. We fought these

* All quotations from tape recordings of our Coming Out of Marriage Group.

images like demon wrestlers - all the while unsure if they were "true" or not, but learning slowly that they must not control our understanding. The necessity for this became clearer as we each individually felt how these images made us helpless and defeated and victimized. We had to learn how to move through such feelings but not become totally defined by them. What images can you add to the ones we found?:

divorce is "the worst possible thing"
 "failure"
 "the end of everything"
 "punishment"
 "wrong"
 "impossible"
 "all my fault"
 "a sin"
 "defeat"
 "disaster"

a divorcee is "fair game"
 "a HORRIBLE word"
 "a gay divorcee"
 "an experienced woman"
 "neurotic forever"
 "a lonely, bitter person with nothing
 to do and no friends"
 "used merchandise"
 "destructive, like a scorpion
 like a black widow spider"
 "a vacant-eyed, depressed woman"

We were thrown into a radical questioning of our past - what was our past - especially about the marriage but also about our whole self? We found ourselves thinking a great deal about our past, finally realizing that we were fumbling to CLAIM OUR PAST in some livable way. Not only did NOTHINGNESS stretch in front of us, but it yawned open behind us too. Remembering, wondering, explaining, searching - these words all describe our attempts. It was like this:

"He had spread a BLACKNESS over our years together, but they were red and yellow and blue and green. I have to find some way to keep that past that's not totally negative..... That's been my life. If I lose that, I lose me."

"I kept trying to remember who I used to be, who I was before the marriage; what kind of person had I been.....was I strong? Had I been happy?"

"Was it all a LIE; had it all been deception?"

We were frightened a lot of the time. Frightened of abandonment, rejection, weakness, pain, confusion, frightened of FACING IT. Frightened of always staying this way. All this brought us, by an erratic, confused, hesitant course, to figuring out who we really were and who we could be. WHO AM I - what are my needs, my abilities, my possibilities, my desires.....what really is my situation, how do I decide, what is my ability and capacity for survival....can I trust myself, my judgement, my perspective. Then, finally for each of us, came some time of REALLY BELIEVING IT - letting it be - deeply knowing it, seeing it into being true. We want to emphasize here that each of us were very different as to whether and to what degree we were wanting or choosing our divorce. Some of us felt it put upon us with no alternative, some of us had initiated it, some of us were wanting and not - wanting it in conflicted and confusing combinations. But, all of us felt it happen in the way we are describing. It was a kind of exhaustion point, a ceasing of avoidance. This sounds like a passive description, but what happened was at this point each of us turned some kind of corner inside and came face to face with herself as a deciding, acting, CHOOSING person. For we began to see that to survive this dying, we had to find our own way of participating in the choosing of it. This came to us in many ways:

"I found myself listening attentively to songs on the radio about surviving pain."

"I realized I would feel less like a victim if I was the one who brought it into court."

"I started to tell people about the pain. I said deep inside somewhere, it will not defeat me. It is not right or fair that I let this crush me."

"I wrote and talked to myself about it. I learned to let myself cry."

"I took off my rings."

"The doctor said I had to take up my bed and walk; that it was up to me, and I realized that that was true and that I wanted to do that."

It was only then that we each began to be able to see ourselves as getting divorced, as actually DOING IT. This was (is) difficult and complex. But now we were (are) doing it and living it from some center in ourselves. Not even that we are always in touch with that center, but that we know it is there in us. We began to trust ourselves and our reactions and ideas and feelings and needs - paying attention to what we were telling ourselves in our dreams, our feelings, our bodies, our actions. In this way, then, we face and deal with many of the arenas of the struggle - many of which still call up the deep anxieties and confusions, but also now good feelings, strengths, accomplishments. Some important arenas of struggle were not

only problems in themselves but it was a problem just accepting them as issues:

"I felt so awful that money was an issue. I kept thinking, 'Is that who I am, someone who cares about money?'"

"Telling my children and seeing it wrench them - that was hard."

"Telling my parents, telling his parents, making other people go through pain and change because we were changing."

"Dividing possessions - this wasn't (but also was) a matter of THINGS."

For all of us getting a perspective on ALONENESS was (is) central. We had to learn what our feelings really were about aloneness and loneliness.....really learning that they aren't the same; sorting out whether and how and when we were dependent and independent and what changes we needed to make; sorting out when our fears were real and when they were exaggerated. We spent a whole group meeting once talking about rape - it is a real fear to us because we are women, and for our group in particular, because we live in a large city. Some of us had never lived alone.

And slowly we each began to evolve an understanding of why WE were in this situation. We had come sooner to an understanding of what we thought about our husbands' actions - although not a complete or necessarily right understanding; but an understanding we could live with, even if it was obviously partial and subject to change. While doing this was important to us in our living, we are choosing not to focus on that in this article - men need to write their story of their struggle - if they do, this would be interesting to see how it is and isn't like ours and how it does and doesn't bear out our perceptions of them.

This story is about our struggle with finding and being ourselves. A difficult part of our understanding was to begin to see how we could not only choose this change, but how we had indeed been creators of it. Two elements clearly emerge to us. WE ARE CHANGING, GROWING, INDEPENDENT PERSONS - seeing this about ourselves and feeling this to be human and good was important. Seeing that our changing as a person (and for all of us in our group this was also connected with awareness of ourselves as women) was a part and a reason for the changing in and of the relationship. This is the positive part. The "negative" part was seeing how we UNCONSCIOUSLY CREATED changing. We call this PATTERN POWER. We found that patterns and stereotypes had a lot to do with our situation. We had all to some degree participated in the IMAGE OF MARRIAGE AS IDEAL (every marriage does, not just those that evolve in the way ours did). We saw that this Ideal had hidden some of the real relating, glossed over it:

"Suddenly I felt transformed into The Bride."

"I realized that I believed that marriage was Forever and that if something isn't forever, it's nothing - but I didn't want to believe that."

"We had fallen into pretty traditional ways of living. I cooked, he went to school, etc., without much question."

We also discovered that we had been SCREENING OUT what didn't fit. How and why this happened is still not clear to us. It is connected with an impulse to self protection and avoidance of pain, but we found that we seem to have done this (and probably this is connected with our conditioning as women) too much or at points that were too different from the image of the marriage relationship to have been thus ignored. Screening out had the function of maintaining the same picture of the relationship and explaining contradictions as exceptions or quirks. This seems connected to us with how wide communication gaps and differences in perspectives between spouses could and did develop. This is one tough element we are still figuring out. It is important to say that it is in this connection, however, this conscious and unconscious screening out, that we feel it is healthy to talk at all about our responsibility in terms of guilt - this is a feeling we are still hesitant to explore - because it is a very involved issue, because we are often taught as women to assume guilt.

One other element that is so large a theme that it can't be left out is THREAT. We found a lot of our struggling was (is) with different types of threat. The threat to ourselves of the whole experience is a theme interwoven in the above description of how we came to face ourselves, threats of negative self images, threats of continuing pain, threats of ceasing to really exist, making and receiving threats. But we also had to struggle with being a threat to others. Being a threat to our husbands - how, why, what that meant. Especially hard was (IS) being a threat to others, because pain is always threatening, and because our ending of our marriages called up this possibility to other married (and single) people, including often our own parents or children.

"I was obviously in so much pain at the time that people in my house were afraid of me. It was too painful for them to look on all that suffering."

"My married friends seemed frightened of me."

Many men also seemed to be threatened in a particular way. It is feared that we know or understand men and are therefore dangerous, less innocent, or sometimes that we are destroyers of men and inflictors of pain on men.

"Men don't want to go out with me when they learn I've been married. Some of them seem scared of something."

"And this one guy visibly moved away from me and sort of blurted out, 'I'll stay away from you then'."

But the basic threat (in ourselves and then to others) is that the ending of a marriage relationship proclaims that relationships can and do end, that there is a basic separateness and aloneness in the human condition. DIVORCE IS SCANDALOUS because it reveals the "scandal" of separate human existence which must be lived as human. No flight from this aspect of our identity can be truly successful. Relating happens between and among individuals - it does not, however much people try, abolish our individuality. Human beings are still learning to live our human separateness in healthy, happy ways and divorce raises up this fact about our being.

BREAK ON THROUGH TO THE OTHER SIDE. This is one way to describe what we have each in our own way had to do, and in breaking through we are finding this can be a good way of living. We are still in many struggles. People fear our divorces because of the feelings divorce calls up in them. We fear our new situation and our new future; we struggle with ourselves and our relationships, especially new relationships - how to form them and understand them; making real changes that are difficult and new - finding new ways to meet needs that used to be met with our husbands. But, we are changing and living as people who have again learned that we are moving, surviving, strong women who can feel happiness and pain. For us our group was a primary facilitator in learning and exploring and finding our new living. We came to it after having passed through the dying and surviving crises individually. We come from many different situations and we are going many different ways (some might marry again, others would not; some are making more career, etc., changes than others; some have communication with former spouses and others do not). But, we find that we can talk about our situations with each other in a way we cannot exactly talk with others who have not been through our particular type of pain and struggle. In this way we can explore aspects of ourselves that we need to explore. Most importantly, we can be weak with each other in a healthy way - because we see ourselves as surviving - and we need to learn not to be frightened of our weaknesses. We do not threaten each other, and we do not have to put on faces for each other. We are a way to grow, not simply a means to some sort of therapy. We don't feel we have to hang on to our group, but that it will experience a continuing natural evolution for each of us until we go into something else, because we are learning to carry our security inside. We had to learn this alone - but not in isolation.

ANG-G-XIOU-SSS

FAIRNESS

HOPE

HATE

GUILT

WORRY

WHEN
YOU'RE
ANGRY

YOU LOOK UGLY

At times it is harder to tell about our ANGER than our despair. Women especially are not supposed to BE ANGRY. In our separate experiences Despair was what pulled us down to the place where we each realized that our struggle was a basic survival struggle and ANGER was what helped us start to harness ENERGY to live and move on through our crises. Our anger at first tended to be diffuse, erratic, confused with other emotions.....our anger was not focused. Gradually we each began to LEARN in our own individual ways that real, lived ANGER is a healthy feeling and that if we run from it, it only turns inside and fuels despair. We experienced our surviving as in part due to our finally refusing in anger to be defeated. We began to be better able to acknowledge to ourselves that we were angry, and then to express it with others. We each have felt it important to have friends with whom we can express our anger as well as our many other feelings. Some people wanted us only to be angry (they usually wanted to pick a "side"), but we found this limited our anger and ourselves. We are still learning. Our group has been a place where we can learn about anger and hear anger from each other.

We are exploring this energy.

We are now discovering how

ANGER can become
STRENGTH.

SHE'S AN ANGRY

FEAR

DEFENSIVE

HOSTILITY

FIST

DYKE

RESENT

BITCH

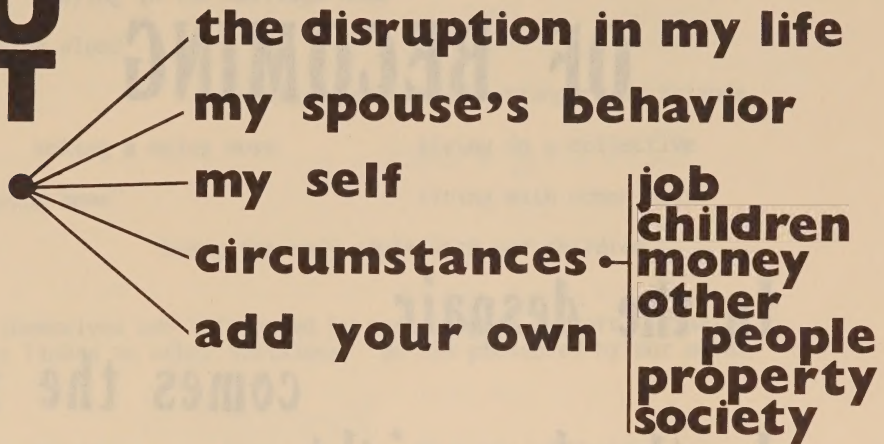
SHRILL

ANGER-R-R-R

you'll close off communication!

OUR ANGER: having it and
receiving it

**B
O
U
T**



AND LEARNING HOW

TO EXPRESS IT

was important to each of us

as we came to

KNOW and

BE and

UNDERSTAND

and LIKE

OUR WHOLE SELVES

THE PROCESS OF BECOMING

In the despair

comes the re-newal

In the deep night

the sun-light

In the death

the re-birth

holding on —

letting GO !

SHAPING OUR NEW LIVING

For many of us an urgent practical decision that has to be made is where to live. We are confronted with different options, such as:

staying in the marriage home
living alone
seeking room-mates - strangers or friends
making a major move living in a collective
"going home" living with women only
being the only adult with our children

Our options themselves are influenced by many complex factors. Usually one choice is linked to other decisions. We are pressured by our needs concerning:

Money	Work	Play	Affection
Safety	Responsibilities		Security
Privacy	Change	Love	
Community	Contact with others		

Sometimes we consider choices we know are temporary. This may be because we want more time to decide or because other plans are not yet possible.

Often other people think they know what is best for us and pressure us toward one choice or another. The "usual" choices often seem restricting to us. It can be hard to think creatively when most people still use standard, traditional choices.

When all the factors become a confusing morass, we learned to establish some priorities. For example, a need to live alone might be important enough that we would be willing to incur greater expense. Or, our desire to take a particular job may be enough of a priority to determine where we live. Establishing priorities helps sort out the options into manageable decisions. In the process of this changing and creating new living, we are learning how our needs change and how to change them if that should seem good. What motivates some of our choices is a desire to continue to give and receive love, in both familiar and new ways.

FLYING

Sharing

Giving out

Freeing

Freedom

Free

Trusting

In touch with one's self

LOVE

To be present to

SEXUALITY

Important to each of us was taking responsibility for choices about our sexuality in new situations. We found ourselves paying attention to the sexual dimension of our lives. Sometimes we wondered if we thought about sexuality too much - which needs were real needs and which were reactions to our culture's emphasis on sex? On direct and subtle levels, we sometimes found ourselves wishing we could ignore issues and implications and quickly reach answers and satisfactions. These came up in many different contexts:

- whether or not to seek sexual experiences;
- whether or not to approach or to respond to a particular person;
- whether to continue or to discontinue a relationship;
- wondering how the sexual element influences our participation in relationships;
- wondering how to distinguish specifically sexual needs from affectional needs;
- learning to experience awkwardness in unfamiliar situations;
- being confused about what we want;
- knowing what we want but being confused about what to do;
- feeling frustration;
- wondering how openly and with whom to talk about our feelings and questions and experiences;
- experiencing the wrong and the anger of being told "what we need" while experiencing very real needs;
- fantasizing perfect solutions;
- risking.

Throughout the questions, our values were not a static, fixed factor - rather we were re-sensing our values. In reconsidering sexual relationships we took new looks at social and institutional definitions:

Marriage - Adultery - Monogamy - Promiscuity - Prostitution -
Chastity - Pornography - Affairs -

labels:

Pre-marital sex - Marital sex - Post-marital sex -
Illicit sex - free love

categorizations:

Heterosexuality - Homosexuality - Lesbianism - Bi-sexuality -
Polysexuality - "Try"-sexuality - Celibacy - Masturbation -
Transsexuality - Group sex - Etc. Etc.

add your own:

Sometimes we wondered about these things abstractly and sometimes they were acutely real and immediate to us.

The ETERNAL

In communication

communicating

hearing

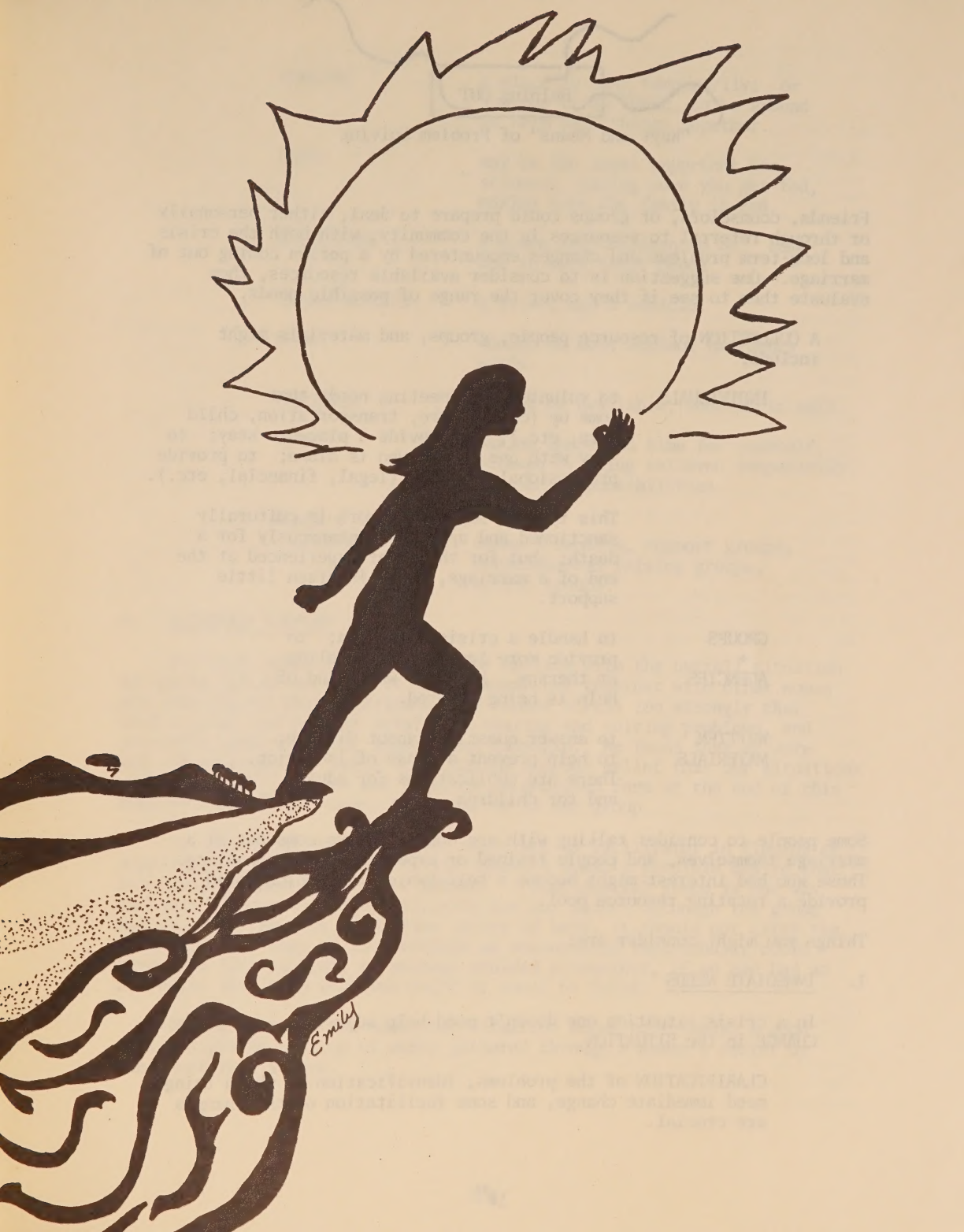
Facing reality

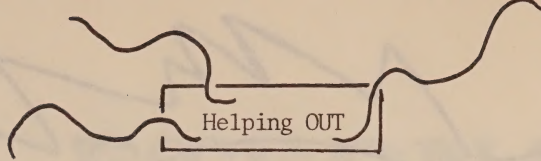
facing remembrances

I am a creator of reality

Live — out and in front of us

Go through the pain





"Ways and Means" of Problem Solving

Friends, counselors, or groups could prepare to deal, either personally or through referral to resources in the community, with both the crisis and long-term problems and changes encountered by a person coming out of marriage. One suggestion is to consider available resources, then evaluate them to see if they cover the range of possible needs.

A COLLECTION of resource people, groups, and materials might include:

INDIVIDUALS	to volunteer for meeting needs that come up (crisis care, transportation, child care, etc.); to provide a place to stay; to stay with one spouse who is alone; to provide professional services (legal, financial, etc.).
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This type of support network is culturally sanctioned and appears spontaneously for a death; but for the grief experienced at the end of a marriage, there is often little support.

GROUPS + AGENCIES	to handle a crisis situation; to provide more long-term counseling or therapy. Look for what kind of help is being offered.
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WRITTEN MATERIALS	to answer questions about divorce; to help prevent a sense of isolation. There are publications for adults and for children.
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Some people to consider talking with are ones who have come out of a marriage themselves, and people trained or experienced in counseling. Those who had interest might become a self-aware group which could provide a rotating resource pool.

Things you might consider are:

1. IMMEDIATE NEEDS

In a crisis situation one doesn't need help adjusting, one needs a CHANGE in the SITUATION.

CLARIFICATION of the problems, identification of which things need immediate change, and some facilitation of the changes are crucial.

HOUSING	a place to stay temporarily; or someone to BE THERE, to be around to help hold things together.
FOOD	may be the least important consciously, making sure you get fed, making sure the family is fed.
CHILD CARE	a place for children to be; someone to meet their needs.
TRANSPORTATION	a driver and a vehicle.
MONEY	enough to meet minimum emergency needs.
PRESENCE	actual or available, someone to call.
TIME	making space and time for yourself, perhaps by being relieved temporarily of some responsibilities.
WOMEN'S GROUPS	women's centers, support groups, consciousness raising groups, action groups.

2. EXTENDED SUPPORT

Our most valuable suggestion for dealing with the overall situation of coming out of marriage is that a woman get together with other women who have shared that experience. We cannot stress too strongly that such a group can be most helpful in sharing and solving problems, and providing understanding, support and strength. We found that we were able to overcome our sense of isolation and our belief that our situations were "unique." We have put together in question form at the end of this booklet some of the topics that came up in our group.

An individual or a counselor might act as facilitator in finding or starting a group, with sensitivity toward a woman's possible desire that her circumstances not be made public. A confidential group is one way to consider your situation privately but not alone. Although the group may serve as the most supportive source of help, it should not carry the whole weight. Many of the problems we encountered individually could have been less painful, or perhaps avoided altogether, if we had had an awareness that such problems might or would be faced.

If you have not yet made your situation known to friends, a good choice might be a group of women gathered through a women's center or other referral source.

RELIGION AND DIVORCE

Women coming out of marriage are likely to encounter some religious attitudes around their divorce. These may appear directly from some religious authority, or perhaps indirectly, filtered through secular language. Women associated with a religious tradition, especially those who participate in traditional forms of religious expression (a church or synagogue) are more apt to be confronted with explicit statements or judgements about their divorce -- whether the content be negative or positive. All women coming out of marriage meet with some new groups of cultural values, which are drawn in part from religious traditions. These indirectly religious values may be more insidious in their destructive potential to women and less simple to identify since they often come from sources which seemingly have little to do with religion *per se* (such as psychologists, sociologists, families, our own internalized values) or because they have been incorporated into the definitions of the nature, structure, and expectation of relationships between or among persons.

The intent of this article is to look at how religion and divorce are connected -- to indicate some of the roots of the relationship, to notice how it operates today, and to point toward a new basis for going beyond the values for interpersonal relationships supplied by Judaism and Christianity. The purpose is not to reject the notion of a religious dimension of human interaction, nor to eliminate systematically a consciousness of such a dimension from the social-cultural structuring of group and personal living. Such a dimension is central, crucial, and potentially transformational in our lives. However, the dominant forms of religious expression in this culture - Judaism and Christianity - are patriarchal and serve to undergird sexism in society. Therefore, the values derived from these traditions, especially as they relate to female/male interaction, also serve to undermine the full being of women, and must be discarded or reformulated in order to move toward new being. It is expressly women, who have been the primary victims of patriarchally derived values, who must undertake this process of establishing our new basis for authentic relational patterns.

The predominant understanding of divorce in America today is secular, not religious -- an issue for the state, not the church. Yet since both secular and religious contexts are sexist and function to oppress women, it would be a mistake to feel that simply rejecting the religious attitudes about-divorce would be of much help to women. In fact, that is not really an option, for despite the American legal ideal of separation of church and state, the two viewpoints are actually entwined, historically and in the present. For example, civil and religious understandings of marriage are combined in our thought and in most ceremonies. The word MARRIAGE includes in its meaning both MATRIMONY, the spiritual bond, and WEDLOCK, the legal contract. Such images as "marriage before god" and "marriages made in heaven" are firmly established in our language and culture.

As the previous example shows, divorce cannot be treated separately from marriage. Divorce is implicitly defined in terms of marriage. The meanings of divorce and marriage change in relation to each other. Their fortunes rise and fall together, usually in inverse proportion. Yet marriage, not divorce, is the norm according to which these definitions change, wherein divorce reflects and supports the current understanding of marriage. Less frequently a major change in divorce structures may cause alteration in the understanding of marriage. Most importantly, divorce must be understood as a structure supportive of marriage in a social-institutional sense -- as an integral part of marriage as it functions in androcentric (male-centered) culture.

Religious claims

Religion has long standing claims on marriage and divorce. While the authority of religion has diminished, those claims remain. Religion is simply no longer the ground on which our secular culture stands. Yet for centuries society drew its reality definitions and values from religious bases, and the structure of society that grew from those roots lingers. This is especially true in marriage and divorce, for marriage and family structure have been a primary connection between theology and (non-priestly) society. The forms and values of religious understandings of marriage are a legacy frequently unquestioned, whether we define ourselves within or without a religious faith and practice.

Women who do participate in a religious tradition may encounter this legacy directly. Current religious institutions have a dual role in the divorce experience. First, the leaders and sustainers of the religious tradition are the ones who interpret biblical and doctrinal statements on divorce. Their interpretations and stance influence the institution's attitudes toward divorce and divorced persons -- setting the climate in which they experience the religious dimensions of divorce. Second, these leaders are among those most often called upon as counselors by persons considering or going through divorce. It is hardly necessary to point out that these religious leaders (rabbis, priests, ministers) are almost exclusively male, and their traditions (scriptures, theologies, ethics, etc.) have been derived from the same sex -their forefathers. Religious traditions are looked to for moral leadership, especially in times of crisis, and they have considered divorce a moral issue. In what is it grounded?

The Root of Bitterness

For both Judaism and Christianity, the Genesis stories of creation and the Garden of Eden form the scriptural basis for understanding women as originally subordinate to man, her husband. Woman is portrayed as evil and responsible for sin in the world -- sinful, guilty, and needing to be punished. These texts lead to theological and social status of women which is articulated in later passages which explicitly deal with divorce and marriage.

The Genesis basis:

The sixth day - creation of living things: Genesis I:26-27

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image and likeness to rule the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all wild animals on earth, and all reptiles that crawl upon the earth." So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (New English Bible)

Creating a companion for Adam: Genesis II:21-24

And so the Lord God put the man into a trance, and while he slept, he took one of his ribs and closed the flesh over the place. The Lord God then built up the rib, which he had taken out of the man, into a woman. He brought her to the man, and the man said:

Now this, at last --
bone from my bones,
flesh from my flesh! --
this shall be called woman
for from man was this taken.

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and the two become one flesh. (NEB)

The curse on Eve for revealing knowledge: Genesis III:16

I will increase your labour and your groaning,
and in labour you shall bear children.
You shall be eager for your husband,
and he shall be your master (NEB)

The absurdities of these stories -- such as the reversal of attributing woman's birthing ability to Adam -- have been evident to feminists. While we may dismiss these myths, they have operated as a justification for various interpretations of divorce scriptures. The disproportionate impact these myths have been given in western patriarchal cultures is partially because they were understood as literal authority, as god's revelation, and were located at the beginning of the scriptures of both Judaism and Christianity. They appealed to the patriarchal sensibility in that they serve to rationalize an oppressed status for women. They are monotonously returned to again and again by the male formulators of religious marriage and divorce law.

Although biblical pronouncements on divorce were made within and for a culture radically different from ours, and even underwent considerable change over the long biblical era itself, many of the attitudes expressed have been incorporated into our present cultural value systems. Scriptural passages relating to divorce were usually attempts to clarify, and

sometimes revise, the laws of human relationships within the religious communities to which they spoke. These statements have been interpreted and discussed by generations of religious scholars and theologians, and coalesced into religious laws and dogmas by religious men. Looking at these scriptures does not assume that they contain any intrinsic authority. The point is that the foundations of Judaic and Christian attitudes toward divorce operate today.

JUDAISM

Judaic law considered women more than "mere chattle," yet only males were assigned full adult status. Gail Shulman points out that while Talmudic laws gave women the "status of a well-loved object or a slightly retarded child"¹ compared to some other societies where women were little more than property belonging to men, early Jewish culture granted relatively higher status and freedom to women. Yet that women still essentially belonged to men is evident, for example, in the Talmudic dictum "A man's home means his wife."

The Mishnah (oral Law on which the Talmud is based) "speaks of 'acquiring' a bride in a section which also deals with the acquisition of slaves, cattle, and property. The bride is acquired in three ways -- by money writ or intercourse -- and upon her husband's death, she is expected to marry her brother-in-law, especially if she is childless."³ The relationship described here is one of property, defined in terms of both the personal family relationships and publicly as far as the law requires a specific remarriage pattern for the intent of producing children within the males' family kinship structure.

Divorce teachings are based on Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man has married a wife, but she does not win his favour because he finds something shameful in her, and he writes her a note of divorce, gives it to her and dismisses her; and suppose after leaving his house she goes off to become the wife of another man, and this next husband turns against her and writes her a note of divorce which he gives her and dismisses her, or dies after making her his wife -- then in that case her first husband who dismissed her is not free to take her back to be his wife again after she has become for him unclean. This is abominable to the Lord; you must not bring sin upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you as your patrimony. (NEB)

Divorce is the prerogative of the man, instituted at his pleasure and for his benefit. The procedure is simple -- writing a get, the note of divorce. A simple form of this decree might be:

"She is not my wife,
And I am not her husband. (Hosea, 2:2)

Valid grounds for this "putting away" of a wife depend on interpretations of the "something shameful" (also translated "indecent in anything").

For the Shammai school of rabbis unchastity was the only grounds, while the Hillel school understood it to be a far more general category - for example serving a husband untithed food.⁴ There is no equivalent warrant for a wife to divorce her husband, nor is it assumed she might find "something shameful" in him. A woman might leave her husband under certain circumstances:

If he takes another woman, he shall not deprive
the first of meat, clothes, and conjugal rights.
If he does not provide her with these three things,
she shall go free without any payment. Exodus 21:10-11 (NEB)

However, in a Jewish court, the get is not valid unless signed by the husband. Thus, in order to divorce, the woman must proceed on a personal basis with her husband and effectively get his consent before going to court.⁵ This makes the divorce a public procedure for a man and a private and public process for a woman.

A divorced woman may be reclaimed by her husband unless she has married another man - repeated in Jeremiah 3:1 (NEB):

If a man puts away his wife
and she leaves him,
And if she then becomes another's
may he go back to her again?
Is not that woman defiled,
a forbidden thing?

This passage combines the notions of women as property and as "unclean" especially through possession -- images which lead to the concept of the divorced woman as "used merchandise."

While adultery is condemned for both women and men, it is expected that women are more responsible than men. Adultery of the wife, not the husband, ends a marriage. Adultery with a married woman is reprehensible because it violates her husband's property rights. Thus there is a sex-defined double standard which is expressed in property terms. In Judaism, divorce (as well as adultery and the inevitable "prostitute" needed to maintain the double standard) serves to support the basic property rights of husband over wife which are structured into marriage.

These laws are current for women within Judaism today. They also operate as a legacy of property and double-standard relationship which is evident in our social structure today.

CHRISTIANITY

Christian attitudes toward divorce are based on New Testament texts which have been exegeted, interpreted, canonized, and enforced in ecclesiastical and theological writings (of males) for centuries. The textual basis will first be presented, followed by indications of the main lines of interpretation.

The Jewish understanding of marriage is evident in the New Testament when Joseph, thinking Mary guilty of adultery when she became pregnant during their betrothal, "resolved to divorce her quietly" (Matthew 1:19-21). However, this expected procedure was abandoned after a dream in which Joseph was told that the pregnancy was due to the holy spirit.

The Sermon on the Mount includes a specific statement in which the Deuteronomic rule is replaced with a new teaching on divorce:

'They were told, "A man who divorces his wife must give her a note of dismissal." But what I tell you is this: If a man divorces his wife for any cause other than unchastity he involves her in adultery; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.' Matthew 5:31-32 (NEB)

The intent here is to reject the Hillel interpretation of cause for divorce as any transgression of the ritual purity or decency requirements for women, and to restrict divorce to adultery. This statement appears elsewhere in the synoptic gospels (Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18, Matthew 19:9) but only in Mark does it include the converse, "and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

The essential change, however, is not over grounds for divorce, but in the meaning of marriage:

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on any and every ground?' He asked in return, 'Have you never read that the Creator made them from the beginning male and female?' and he added, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be made one with his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. It follows that they are no longer two individuals: they are one flesh. What God has joined together, man must not separate.' 'Why then', they objected, 'did Moses lay it down that a man might divorce his wife by note of dismissal?' He answered, 'It was because your minds were closed that Moses gave you permission to divorce your wives; but it was not like that when all began. I tell you, if a man divorces his wife for any cause other than unchastity and marries another, he commits adultery.' (NEB)

Here marriage is understood to be a permanent bond, a religious bond, based in the order of creation described in the reference to Genesis 1 ('male and female he created them'). This new approach, which threw out the Rabbinic teachings, was considered a radical ethic at the time and a threat to Jewish authority. The Markan passage (10:11-12) which has been understood to be the oldest preserved form, omits the allowance for divorce because of adultery, and leaves no conditions for divorce or remarriage.

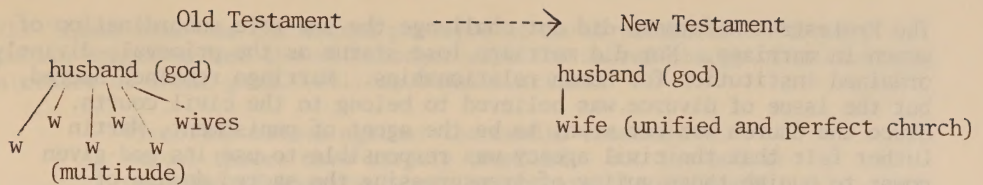
Divorce in the Christian tradition has been given favorable judgement only in very specific circumstances, where it is seen as a lesser evil. For example, in the sixth century, sexual abstinence was valued so highly that some favored divorce for those who decided to become celibate. Peter Lombard, in the twelfth century, viewed marriage as "remedial" -- a means of avoiding the greater evil of sexuality outside of marriage. John Colet wrote in the fifteenth century, "For marriage has no thing good in itself, save so far as it is a remedy for necessary evil." Marriage had been valued for having children but "now that the Bridegroom has come, and the truth of spiritual marriage is fulfilled, there is no longer any necessity for the married state to exist" ⁶ Colet's thought was based on the belief that if everyone would convert the end would come. He scoffed at the idea that some provision should be made for having children, saying that Christians needed regeneration in Christ, not generation.

Not until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century was marriage canonized as one of the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. This was the point at which marriage ceremonies were moved from the church steps, inside toward the altar. Marriage became a means of salvation, a channel for grace. The arguments supporting the Council's decision were synthesized much earlier -- most clearly by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. The debate over marriage as a sacrament was a major point of contention between the Reformers and the traditional Roman Church, and related to the issue of whether the ecclesiastical or the civil courts should have jurisdiction over marriage and divorce. The Council of Trent marked a break between the contending views of the amount of sacred value assigned to marriage.

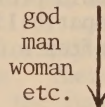
The groundwork for Thomas Aquinas's concept of sacramental marriage was laid earlier, notably by Augustine. Based on Paul's letter (Ephesians 5) and following the usual scholastic method of interpreting selected scriptural "proof texts" to support a theological assertion, Augustine elaborated the analogy of the unity of Christ with the Church and the unity of the husband and wife in marriage. Dominance was structured into the relationship.

Christ	:	"groom"	:	husband	:	Male	:	Head
_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____
Church	:	"Bride"	:	wife	:	Female	:	Body

This was seen as a new ordinance. The fact that Old Testament patriarchs had several wives (but never the reverse) was seen to have been symbolic of the multitude which would be subject under one god as several wives were to one husband. Christian marriages were limited to one wife per husband because the New Testament church of believers was to be unified and perfect toward god.



Additional insight was found by the twelfth century Hugo of St. Victor who extended Augustine's analogy by adding that god rules the "soul of man" in much the same pattern. Since the soul of "man" could not be comparable to the ways in which women were ruled, the ruling power structure was clearly ordered from top to bottom:



The belief that this model of subordinate relationship for women, determined by sex and reinforced by sex roles, entrenched in the marriage relationship, was a mystery and a sacrament is the basis of the Christian doctrine of the permanent "indissolubility of marriage" legally maintained in the Roman Catholic Church. The expectation is that women are to play the part of the submissive Christian attitude -- toward both god and their husbands. This belief is culturally retained, and expressed in Protestantism, in the "till death do us part" commitment of marriage ceremonies.

Because of this doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage, the Roman Catholic Church had no definition of divorce. However, marriages were ended by separation ("from bed and board") or absolute annulment. Thus while divorce was not strictly possible, its function was assumed in other forms. Remarriage became possible after absolute annulments which meant there never was a marriage in the first place. Annulments were justified for a great variety of "impediments." The abuses that resulted, such as "buying" annulments, were among the reasons that it came under attack by reformers. Other reasons were alternative scriptural and theological interpretations. For instance, some claimed the strictness demanded was unfair to men, who, they fretted, could potentially suffer by being married to a wife guilty of parricide (father murder), poisoning, or witchcraft. It was argued that remarriage, when it would lead to a better marriage, was preferable to strictly adhering to the law, which was presented as an ideal. For this another popular analogy was drawn between Christ's initial bond to the synagogue, which became an adulteress and was divorced by Christ, and Christ's remarriage to the more perfect New Testament Church.

The Protestant Reformers did not challenge the sex-role subordination of women in marriage. Nor did marriage lose status as the primeval, divinely ordained institution for human relationships. Marriage remained sacred, but the issue of divorce was believed to belong to the civil courts. Since the Church was not meant to be the agent of punishment, Martin Luther felt that the civil agency was responsible to use its god-given power to punish those guilty of transgressing the sacred domain of marriage. While the spiritual bond of marriage was a holy and crucial thing, marriage relationships were, from his male-centered point of view, "a secular and outward thing, having to do with wife and children, house and home, and with other matters that belong to the realm of government, all of which have been completely subjected to reason."⁷

The secular model for divorce was presented by Thomas More in his Utopia (16th century). His ideal community would provide civil divorce through the Senate for what we would call incompatibility ("insufferable perverseness") or by mutual consent, but only after a careful inquiry by the "Senators and their wives" (!).

From this brief look at the religious roots, it is evident that Jewish understandings of marriage and divorce arise from and sustain patriarchal values. The forms which these values define structure property relationships which garner ownership and economic power for the male. Christianity, while attempting to destroy distinctions between male and female in (male) Christ, nevertheless makes sacred in marriage male dominance over females.

Both traditions represent women as spiritually inferior to men, and translate this fundamental theological double standard into their teachings and social forms. Both tend toward "justification" of males over females in divorce because women are seen as inherently evil (Eve). Although punishment for males who transgress the moral bounds of the relationship is declared, in fact both religious and civil courts remain male controlled.

The Legacy Today

Several examples have shown that as marriage is devalued, the sinfulness or stigma of divorce is lessened. Conversely, as marriage is defined as the norm, divorce becomes anathema. It is interesting to note that the sixteenth century, when marriage became a Christian sacrament, saw the rise of the family as we know it today - defined primarily as a couple and their children. Previously the family had served as the channel for property, names, and life. Individuals lived in society, not in the family. By the 18th century, society discovered the time of childhood, and the purpose of the home was refocused. It became the center of privacy, isolation, comfort and domesticity -- presided over by the woman/wife/mother and dedicated to the education of (male) children. With these increasing pressures on the home and marriage came an increase in divorce. The institution of divorce served as a safety valve to preserve the institution of marriage. The 19th century romanticism of

the "ideal home" as the sacred preserve of moral values in a "corrupt" public sphere endowed the wife-mother with the sacred charge of maintaining a center of moral good. William O'Neill writes:

Victorian taboos against the candid treatment of sexual themes have largely crumbled. But the social position of American women is not greatly different from what it was at the end of the nineteenth century, and the Victorian family system has demonstrated an astonishing durability. Mass divorce, therefore, now seems to me to have been not the leading edge of a moral revolution so much as the first of a series of adjustments by which the patriarchal family and the Protestant sexual ethic have accommodated themselves to the demands of an urban, industrial society.¹⁰

Thus divorce is only superficially the opposite of marriage. Actually it is supportive of marriage. Therefore to fixate in a simple way on divorce without challenging the fundamental ideas about human relationships implicit in its structure, will have little effect on the dominant social norms. This would prove as meaningless as the efforts of many women in the 19th century to exalt marriage and the family-as-foundation-of-society ideas. Women, assigned the duty of self-sacrifice and supportive partial being, have been the ones to bear the cost of this system.

New Categories

A recent popular book on Divorce contained no mention of religious dimensions of divorce aside from routine inclusion of pastoral counselors as among the counseling services available to divorcing people. It was what one might call a thoroughly "secular" treatment of divorce. The title of the book, Uncoupling: The Art of Coming Apart, indicates that it was an effort to ease the process of divorce.¹¹ That title evokes the image of two railroad cars being uncoupled. Taken a bit further, the divorce courts would be the railroad yard roundhouse, efficiently uncoupling the cars, shunting them off to a side rail briefly, then hooking them up again in new combinations to go back down the same track. The problem here is that making divorce more mechanically efficient does little to alter the well worn tracks along which it runs. While it certainly may ease the process individually, it diverts attention from the source of the problem -- institutional marriage. A secular approach to marriage and divorce in sexist culture is much the same as the approach of religious traditions in that both function to oppress women. The civil courts have replaced the religious courts, and there are striking similarities between the robed male judges of family courtrooms and the church judges of the inquisition, whose authority the state has replaced.¹²

Discussion of divorce often raises the distinction between marriage as the personal "relationship" between the woman and man and marriage the "institution" -- the social-legal structure. Divorce is then understood in two parts -- the transformation of the personal relationship and the dissolution of the contract which takes place in the civil courts. In fact this distinction is often discovered by women as they come out of marriage because the legal divorce decree does not usually coincide with the experience of the ending of the personal relationship.

While this distinction is useful, it is oversimplified. Modeled after the public-private distinction so dear to American legal and economic theories, this division assumes that in fact the separation can be neatly made. While dividing points could probably be found in individual cases, what is considered personal and what is seen as institutional varies so greatly from person to person that in general new categories are needed. The personal relationship aspects of marriage cannot be clearly cordoned off from the social-functional aspect of marriage. Whatever the personal relationship may be, it is functionally limited by the marriage. While there is always the possibility of transcending the social-cultural definitions of interpersonal relationships, that is especially difficult within marriage -- for marriage is a central point in which women are defined as subordinate to men. In fact, marriage is embedded in a complex welter of related structures and role expectations, crucial to the maintenance of sexist society. Essentially marriage mediates against authentic being for women, and thus has severe limitations for authentic possibilities of personal relationship.

New Norms

Our culture is deeply imbued with a "marriage ethos." One is expected to have a "marital status" of some sort, defined in terms of marriage. The legacy of marriage seen as the natural order of creation (Genesis I) has created a norm of heterosexual monogamy for adult life. This norm devalues the many other relationship patterns which persons experience, particularly same sex relationships. For women marriage sometimes disguises the fact of our inequality, by giving us status through men. The marriage norm has also hindered relationships among women by devaluing female-female relationships (whether sexual or not) while women are isolated in individual (men's) homes. Social structures of work and economic power facilitate male-male relationships which serve to perpetuate male power without threatening the marriage norm.

Women are defined in terms of relationships which come from marriage and family structures far more than men. Thus women experience divorce as a profound redefinition of themselves -- one which confronts them with different social options. In rejecting marriage as the norm for interpersonal definitions, women will encounter fewer barriers to relating with each other. A new ethic must be sought within the experience of collectively exploring and developing new norms within our lives as women.

NOTES

1. Gail Shulman, "View from the Back of the Synagogue: Women in Judaism," in Sexist Religion and Women in the Church, ed. Alice L. Hageman in collaboration with The Women's Caucus of Harvard Divinity School (New York: Association Press, 1974), p. 144.
2. Yoma, 2b.
3. Shulman, p. 150 (see The Mishnah, Nashim, Kiddushin, 1:1, p.321).
4. Their respective rulings: The School of Shammai say: A man may not divorce his wife unless he has found unchastity in her... And the School of Hillel say: He may divorce her even if she spoiled a dish for him -- The Mishnah, Nashin, Gitten 9:10.
5. Shulman, p. 151.
6. V. Norskov Olsen, The New Testament Logia on Divorce, (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1971).
7. Luther's Works, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955 ff.), vol. XXI, p. 93.
8. Ideal Commonwealths (London, 1901) p.70.
9. Philip Aries, Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life (New York, 1962).
10. William L. O'Neill, Divorce in the Progressive Era, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Pr., 1967), p. viii.
11. Norman Sheresky and Marya Mannes, Uncoupling: the Art of Coming Apart, (New York: Viking Press, 1972).
12. Conversation with Carol Delaney, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1974.

QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS

These questions might be helpful - for starting discussion in a group and for thinking individually. It is not a complete list and not all questions will be appropriate to everyone's situation. They reflect many different stages in the process of coming out of marriage. We found these questions all coming up in different ways at different times in our group.

Other things we found helpful in our group were:

1. Tape recording our discussions and listening to them later. We learned new things about ourselves in this way. (All discussions and tapes were confidential to the group.)
2. Trying to meet regularly even if we couldn't all be there all the time.
3. Meeting at our different living places when that was possible.
4. Accepting new people into our group as we heard about each other.

What is my situation right now?

What are my feelings about divorce?

What are my images about divorced people?

What do I know about how to get a divorce?

Have I told anyone about my situation? Whom have I told and what have I told? How did it come up?

How am I feeling about myself?

What depresses me? What do I do when I'm depressed?

What frightens me? What do I do when I'm frightened?

What makes me happy? What do I do when I'm happy?

How do I feel about being alone?

When am I alone? What do I do then?

When am I with people? Who are they and what is that like?

What was important to me in the marriage relationship?

What reassures me about myself?

How are friends reacting?

Will I change my name? And to what might I change it?

In what subtle and obvious ways is marriage an institution? How do I feel about this?

What times (such as holidays) are particularly crucial for me?

When do I feel jealousy? How do I handle that?

Does religion or church affect my situation? How?

How do I feel about memories?

How do I see my past now?

How do I make plans?

How do my moods change?

How do I feel my marriage was like other marriages? How was it different?

What are my abilities? What can I utilize positively in my life?

What are my fantasies like? Which ones do I act upon?

What is my job like? Or school? Where will I live?

Do I think about suicide? When?

Do I think about death? When?

What is my understanding of what is happening?

What do I think my (ex)spouse's understanding is?

How and why are my (ex)spouse and I communicating, or not communicating?

What role is money playing in my situation? And possessions?

How are the children affected? What are my relationships with them like now?

How are my parents affected? What are my relationships with them like now?

What about other relatives?

In what ways am I dependent? Which are good ways and which are bad ways?

What things confuse me? And how does this make me feel?

How does my being a woman affect my situation?

What are my dreams like?

What are my needs? Which are being met and which are not?

What threatens me?

Who threatens me? Whom do I threaten?

How am I feeling physically? Do I feel tensions? How do I care for my body?

Am I making new relationships? What is that like?

What is hardest for me?

What do I think I'm doing right?

What changes have I already made?

What do I feel resentment about? How do I handle that?

Do I cry? When?

Am I angry? When? How do I express it?

Do I have guilt feelings? About what?

When do I feel love?

When do I feel hate?

What are my sexual feelings? Expressions/actions?

When do I feel grief? Loss?

When do I feel abandoned? Rejected? Abandoning? Rejecting?

Are there any other people I see as significantly involved in the marriage ending?

What previous experience have I had with divorce?

Have I thought about divorce before?

Why did I get married?

What do I want to happen?

What immediate decisions do I face?

What long range decisions do I face?



SERVICES FOR WOMEN
IN RHODE ISLAND

1977

Published for:
International Women's Year
State Meeting
June, 1977

Special thanks to

R.I. Council of Community Services

for their help in all phases of this publication.

The following pages offer a selection of places to help with a variety of problem areas. The list is meant as an aid only and is not in any way a comprehensive directory of services. Contact the general information services listed in the front for more complete listings of resources.

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Where to call to find out where to call

Information Resource Centers

Call for Action
WJAR Radio
176 Weybosset St.
Providence

Phone: 274-2340

Information services provided over the phone.
Assistance to consumers with problems.

Information Service
Council for Community Services, Inc.
229 Waterman St.
Providence

Phone: 351-6500

A generalized information and referral service for
Greater Rhode Island.

T. O. C. T. A. (Transportation, Outreach, Communication,
and Technical Assistance)
48 Hamlet St.
Woonsocket

Phone: 765-1120

Information provided on Social Services for
Woonsocket area residents.

Sympatico
29 Columbia St.
Wakefield

Phone: 783-0772; 783-0650

24 hour "hot-line" for information and referral.

Department on Aging
150 Washington St.
Providence

Phone: 277-2880

Information and referral service for and concerning
Senior Citizens.

Youth Help Line
Division on Youth Development
150 Washington St.
Providence

Phone: 277-3747

Information and referral service for and concerning
youth.

Career Counseling Resources

Career Counseling
Quonset Point, Building 880
Ocean State Training Center
Quonset Point, R. I.

Phone: 272-0900

Information and referral service for educational and vocational concerns. Free telephone counseling for adults. Resource open to the public for reference use.

Opportunities for Women
144 Westminster St.
Providence

Phone: 277-3576 or 3577

Vocational information, job hunting techniques, resume-writing assistance and special workshops for women.

Child Care

Family Day-Care
Social and Rehabilitative Services
100 Fountain St.
Providence

Phone: 277-2804

Provides names of licensed family day-care providers. Children cared for in home settings. Scaled fee.

Day Care Centers *

Scaled fee. Each center is run differently, with varied health services and personnel structure.

* Call Information Service (351-6500) for center nearest you.

Consumer Resources

Better Business Bureau
248 Weybosset St.
Providence

Phone: 272-9800

Consumer education and mediation of complaints.

R.I. Consumers Council
365 Broadway
Providence

Phone: 277-2764

Agency handles consumer complaints.

Attorney General's Office
Consumer Affairs Unit
250 Benefit St.
Providence

Phone: 831-6850

Can advise of rights in all areas

Educational Resources

ARISE (Adult Referral and Information Service in
Education)
396 Smith St.
Providence

Phone: 272-4900; ext. 241

Service operated by Providence Adult Education Department. Provides information, short-term counseling, referral and follow-up concerning adult and continuing education.

Urban Educational Center of Rhode Island
2 Winter St.
Providence

Phone: 456-8185

Provides high school equivalency preparation and testing along with college and general interests courses. Educational counseling available.

University Without Walls
99 Empire St.
Providence

Phone: 861-5800

Part of UECU (Union of Experimental Colleges and Universities). Student design own college-level curriculum.

Project CHOICE
Urban Education Center
830 Eddy St.
Providence

Phone: 461-3890

Clearinghouse for information on continuing education opportunities. Free service.

Consult major universities in Rhode Island for their programs geared to women -- e.i., those with courses offered in evening or special programs for women.

R.I. Women's School
c/o MacKenzie
Simmons Lake Drive
Johnston, R.I.

Phone: 942-2094

Recently organized to provide women with an opportunity to learn non-traditional skills in a non-threatening atmosphere. Also to explore women's issues. Courses offered--e.g., auto mechanics, carpentry, feminist theory.

Financial Resources

R.I. Consumers Council
Division of Credit Counseling
365 Broadway
Providence

Phone: 277-2764

Urban League
Home Ownership Counseling Service
208 Prairie Avenue
Providence

Phone: 351-5010

Handicapped Persons Resources

Vocational Resources of R.I., Inc.
100 Houghton St.
Providence

Phone: 861-2080

United Way-funded comprehensive vocational
rehabilitation program.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
40 Fountain St.
Providence

Phone: 421-7005

Vocational rehabilitation program directed by the State.

Paraplegia Association of Rhode Island, Inc., (PARI)
P. O. Box 6906
Providence

No phone.

Advocacy and education programs concerning
physically handicapped.

Health Resources

Providence Health Centers, Inc.
469 Angell St.
Providence

Phone: 861-6300

Federally-funded health centers located throughout
Providence. Call central number for one nearest you.

Planned Parenthood of R. I.
187 Westminster Mall
Providence

Phone: 421-9620

Contraceptive counseling and service; venereal disease and pregnancy testing, vasectomy clinic; abortion clinic.

Women's Health Collective
P. O. Box 1313
Annex Station
Providence

No phone.

Advocacy group for women's health issues. Formed group for women with mastectomies. Working on book re: women's health resources in R.I.

R.I. Health Advocates
Community Affairs Commission
19 Davis St.
Providence

Phone: 421-7855

Assistance to persons with health concerns--information and counseling. Advocates for quality health for all Rhode Islanders, regardless of ability to pay.

Job/Job Training Resources
(See Career Counseling Resources also)

Project RATE
34 East Ave.
Pawtucket

Dale Carlia Corners
Wakefield

Phone: 725-5554

Phone: 783-0101

Employment oriented education program funded through CETA.

CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act)
40 Fountain St.
Providence

Phone: 861-0800

Federally funded employment program; provides on-the-job training experience.

Recruitment and Training Program
200 Cranston St.
Providence

Phone: 274-2250

Private corporation under contract with U.S. Department of Labor to assist people in finding jobs--particularly in construction industries. Primary focus is on assistance to minorities and economically disadvantaged. Includes services to place minority women in professional positions and to place women in non-traditional jobs.

Opportunities Industrial Center of R. I.
45 Hamilton St.
Providence

Phone: 272-4400

Job training and placement program for economically disadvantaged and minorities.

Senior Community Service Employment
Program
80 Boston Neck Road
N. Kingstown

Phone: 295-8873

Employment program for Senior Citizens (55 years and
up with limited income).

Legal Resources

Lawyer Referral Service
1804 Industrial Bank Bldg.
Providence

Phone: 421-5740

Serves people who need legal services and can afford
moderate fee. Referral made to number of R.I. Bar
Association.

Legal Aid Society of R.I.
76 Dorrance St.
Providence

344 Broadway
Newport

Phone: 331-4665

Phone: 847-1862

Provides counsel for anyone who cannot afford to
obtain legal counsel.

R.I. Legal Services, Inc.
77 Dorrance St.
Providence

Phone: 274-2652.

Provides legal services in civil cases for anyone
unable to employ counsel for financial reasons.
No fee.

R.I. Women Lawyers Ass'n
c/o Doris J. Licht
2200 Industrial Bank Bldg.
Providence

Phone: 274-2000

This is not a formal legal aid group. However,
referrals can be made to sympathetic lawyers in
the State.

Older Women Resources

Department on Aging
150 Washington St.
Providence

Phone: 277-2880

For general information on all programs for Senior
Citizens

Senior Citizens Centers

These centers have educational and social programs
for Senior Citizens. Many have meals also provided.
Call Information Services (351-6500) for centers
nearest you.

Senior Citizens Transportation Service
3275 Post Road
Warwick, R.I.

Phone: 738-6400; 728-4700

Transportation help provided to Senior Citizens.
Priority given to medical appointments.

R. I. Council of Senior Citizens
396 Smith St.
Providence

Phone: 331-2336

Works primarily as the Senior Citizens Advocate at all levels to provide information about and to improve all aspects of Senior Citizens' lives.

Parents Resources

Parent Education Programs:

These programs offer a chance to learn about child development, to learn some new skills to make parenting easier and to share with other parents. The groups are focused on developmental stages of parenting--i. e., parents of infants, parents of toddlers, parents of adolescents.

Group offered by:

- Family Service, Inc., 75 Charlesfield St.
Providence. Phone: 331-1350
- Jewish Family and Children's Service, 229 Waterman St., Providence. Phone: 331-1244
- Woonsocket Family and Child Service, 8 Court St.,
Woonsocket. Phone: 762-5656

Other: Parent Effectiveness Training (P. E. T.)
offered by C. O. D. A. C. ,
911 Pontiac Ave., Cranston

Phone: 461-5056

Service for Single Parents:

Parents Without Partners -- a non-profit, non-sectarian educational organization devoted to interests of single parents and their children.
Call: 331-5177

Free Publication for New Parents

"Pierre Pelican" -- explains growth and development and mental health concepts of parenthood.
Call Mental Health Association of R. I. : 272-6730

Parents Anonymous Groups

Support groups to help parents who "lose their cool" with their children. These groups are located throughout the State. No cost.
Call: 728-3260 (YWCA in Pawtucket) for group nearest you.

Personal Counseling Resources

Family Service Agencies

Counseling available for individual adult or child, marital or family problems. Scaled fee.

Contact Information Services (351-6500) for agency nearest you.

Mental Health Centers*

Counseling available for mental health concerns of adult or child. Scaled fee.

Pastoral Counseling Centers*

Counseling available for individual and marital concerns--usually staffed by clergy. Scaled fee.

SPAN, Inc.
393 Blackstone St.
Providence

Phone: 331-0977

Privately-funded crisis intervention and prevention center for adults in criminal justice system.

Talbot House, Inc.
428 Pine St.
Providence

Phone: 831-4150

Comprehensive counseling and service program for persons with alcohol addiction.

Drug Addiction Concerns*

Birthright Counseling
433 Elmwood Ave.
Providence

Phone: 467-4545

Counseling regarding "problem" pregnancies.

*Contact Information Services (351-6500) for agency nearest you.

Personal Growth Opportunities

Workshops offered on a variety of subjects regarding family life and personal growth--e.g., divorce, separation, sexuality, assertiveness training.

Contact: Metropolitan Providence Co-operative
Extension Program
University of R.I.
400 Wickendon St.
Providence

Phone: 521-6440

Gay Help Line

Counseling, information and referral services for gay persons operated nightly between 8 PM and 12 midnight.

Phone: 751-3322

Personal Crisis Resources

Women's Center, Inc.
37 Congress Ave.
Providence

Phone: 781-4080

Provides temporary shelter, counseling and referral for women in need of such.

Rape Crisis Center
324 Broad St.
Pawtucket

Phone: 861-4040

Personal support, medical and legal information
for rape victims.

F. I. S. H.

24-hour volunteer service providing emergency
services--e.g., transportation, meals, baby-
sitting.

Contact Information Service (351-6500) for program
nearest you.

Sojourner House
Task Force for Battered Women
P. O. Box 5667
Providence, R.I. 02903

Group which is in process of establishing temporary
shelter for battered women.

Travelers Aid Society of R. I.
33 Chestnut St.
Providence

Phone: 521-2255

Counseling and information for people in transit.

McAuley House
83 Gallup St.
Providence

Phone: 941-9013

Provides free noon-time meal for anyone who needs
such.

Spanish Persons Resources

Coalition De Organizaciones Hispanas
827 Broad St.
Providence

Phone: 467-6050

- Accion Hispana
Co-ordinator, José Pimentel

Social services and referral.

- Orienacion Hispana
Co-ordinator, Manuel Jimenez

Social services and referral educational activities--E. S. L.

- Club Juvenil
Contact: Miss Carmen Lugo; Miss Liz Vevas.

Programs to maintain Spanish cultures; sports activities.

- Hispanos Unidos de R. I.
Contact: Francisco Maldonado

Cultural and social activities.

Latin America Medical Center
730 Broad St.
Providence

Phone: 461-1718

Provides Family Planning, internal medicine,
pediatric service, laboratory. Dr. D. Torrado
and Marta Torrado.

Latin American Society of the A.C.I.
P. O. Box 8273
Cranston, R.I. 02920

Services to the Spanish-speaking inmates.

Social and Rehabilitative Service
Public Welfare
Spanish Interpreter, Aniko Cseh

Phone: 272-2000

Opportunities Industrial Center (O.I.C.)
45 Hamilton St.
Providence

Phone: 272-4400

Contact: Victor Mendoza.

Vocational training, job referral, E.S. L. (English
as second language).

Urban League
25 Mystic St.
Providence

Phone: 351-5010

Contact: Joyce Jarrett

Housing and job placement.

Project Persona
Providence Public Library
275 Elmwood Avenue
Providence

Responds to educational and cultural needs of Spanish-speaking immigrants.

International House of R. I. , Inc.
8 Stimson Ave.
Providence

Phone: 421-7181

Aim of varied programs to cushion "culture shock" for foreign persons in R. I. , and to introduce foreign cultures to people of R. I.

International Institute of Providence, Inc.
104 Princeton Ave.
Providence

Phone: 421-8662

Provides social and recreational services and interpreters for immigrants and foreigners.

Volunteer Opportunities

R. S. V. P. (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program)
1 Cathedral Square
Providence

Phone: 861-9800

Information and placement of Senior Citizens in volunteer positions. The office listed above is for Providence.

Call Information Service (351-6500) for office nearest you.

V. I. A. (Volunteers in Action)
229 Waterman St.
Providence

Phone: 421-6547

Information, recruitment and placement in volunteer positions throughout the State. Consultation provided to organizations desiring volunteer development.

Welfare/Welfare Rights Resources

Social and Rehabilitative Services
State of R. I.
600 New London Ave.
Cranston

Assistance Payments: 464-3361
Food Stamps, 100 Fountain St., Providence, 277-2624
Nights, Sundays & Holidays: 351-6500

Welfare Rights Information

Catholic Inner-City Center
524 Prairie Ave.
Providence

Phone: 941-5600

Blackstone Valley Fair Welfare
124 Crook Manor
Pawtucket

Phone: 722-3180

Women's Groups (Feminist)

N. O. W. of R. I.
62 Jackson Walkway
Providence

Phone: 861-2910

Improve status of women through social action and
educational programs.

Permanent Advisory Commission
on Women in R. I.
Room 110
235 Promenade St.
Providence

Phone: 277-2734

Members appointed to study and recommend action
on women's issues.

R. I. Chapter of the Women's Political Caucus
P. O. Box 884
Annex Station
Providence, R. I. 02901

RIWPC is a multipartisan organization. Its purpose
is to increase the political power of women--joins
with other women to play major role in politics and
policy-making at all levels of government and party
organization.

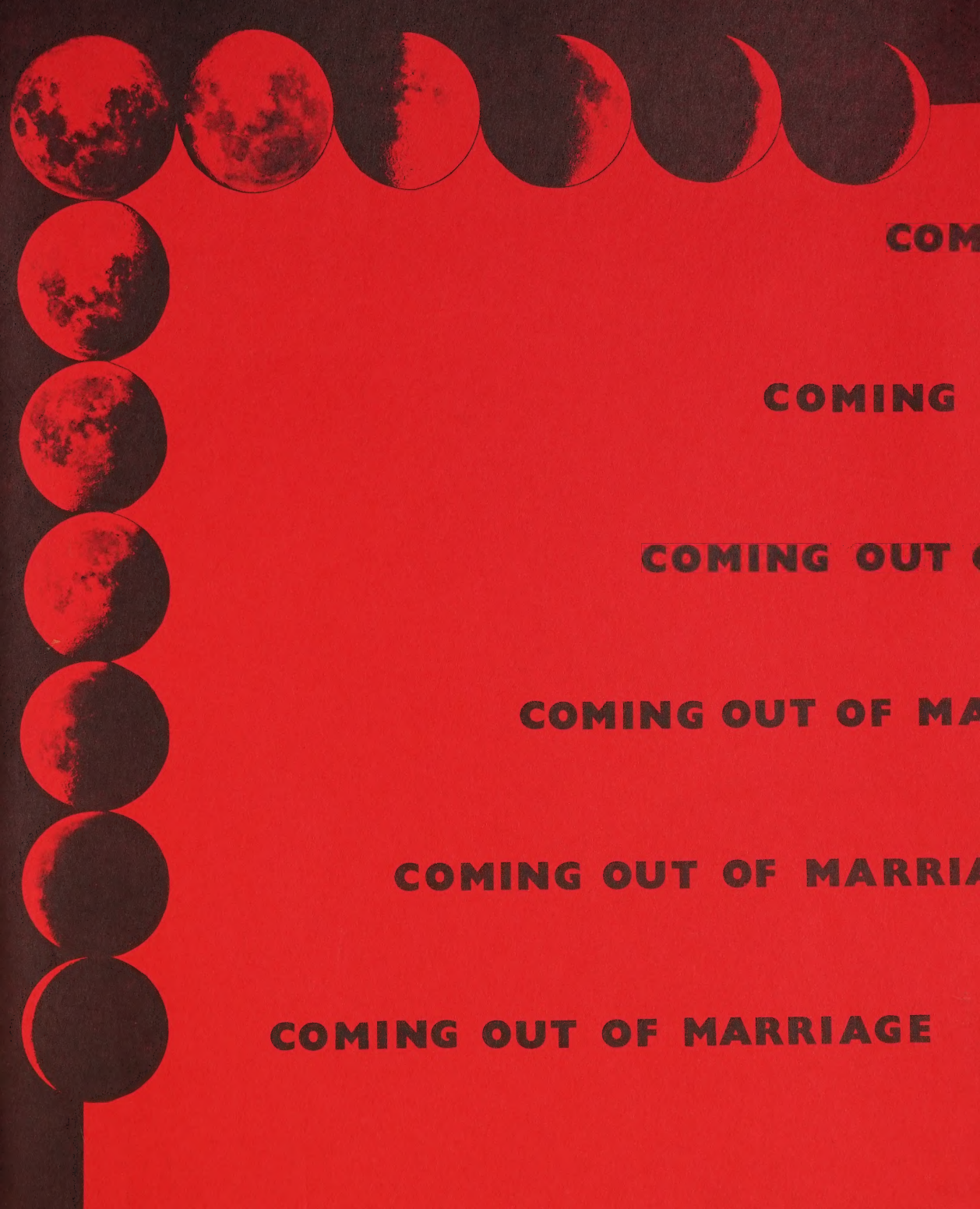
Women's Liberation Union
P. O. Box 2302, East Side Station
Providence, R. I. 02906

Considered radical by some, this is a non-hierarchical grass-roots organization committed to furthering rights of women through educational and lobbying endeavors.

Gay Community Services of R. I.
55 Eddy St.
Providence

Supporting organization which helps community groups or individuals working on behalf of gay rights. Offers meeting space as well as information and referral. Gay Women of R. I. is in formation and can be reached through this organization.

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COMING OUT OF MARRIAGE

COMING OUT OF MARRIAGE

by

Emily Culpepper, Hazel Staats Meyners, Diane Miller

Copyright, 1973, by Emily Culpepper,
Hazel Staats Meyners, Diane Miller
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Printed by New England Free Press.
Somerville, Massachusetts

Reprinted 1976

Distributed through:
Coming Out of Marriage Booklet
c/o Office of Women's Programs
45 Francis Avenue
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

(See facing page for how to order)

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Introduction: Who We Are

These materials have been put together by three women out of a larger group of women who had gotten together in an attempt to describe and define our experiences in coming out of marriage. We came together out of our need and desire to share our experiences with other women who were somewhere in the process of their marriage ending. We were not sure what we would find or how much we could share with each other. Even though we came from different situations and are going different directions, we found that what we were passing through was remarkably alike.

As we talked we found that the group helped us meet needs that were important in our new living and that we had not found being met elsewhere. We came to feel that making available written material about our experience might facilitate that process for others. We three chose to put together a collection of several short articles in order to utilize different styles and forms to express emotion and to articulate our ideas as well as to convey basic information. The booklet offers a variety of resources, some of which may be more useful to you than others, depending on your particular situation.

We think it is important to indicate what informs our perspective. We are all white, have varied access to middle-class resources, have had counseling experience and some teaching experience. At the time of writing this packet we are involved in theological education. We differ in styles, circumstances of our marriages, families, and divorces. We are from different parts of the country. The ages in our group ranged from 24 to 49.

We are aware of our female socialization and our orientation reflects this. We have many questions about how men experience divorce and coming out of marriage and what relationship their experiences have to ours.

We are writing about divorce and coming out of marriage from the inside out rather than as objective observers of divorce. The booklet might be helpful for use in a group such as ours, but could also be helpful for women individually, for women who might seek other resources, and for men.

We welcome your responses to this booklet.

Emily Erwin Culpepper
Hazel Staats Meyners
Diane Marie Wynne Miller

THIS BOOKLET IS FOR USE IN WHATEVER WAY YOU FIND USEFUL

The Strength to Hold On

In all major crises, of which divorce is certainly one, the maintenance of the feeling of one's worth and belief in one's own human dignity becomes of greatest importance. It is a time when the highest possibility for destruction holds in it also the most creative potentiality for growth. To keep our existence focused on the positive possibilities requires a great deal of centering on the capacities for renewal.

To be involved in re-evaluating and re-assessing one's own being requires the ability to look openly, and from a perspective which allows some objectivity, at the relationships in one's total environment. Because of the fallibility of human existence, this becomes a difficult and humbling experience. Through the distraughtness of rejection and disturbance must come some order and sense of quietness. This search requires great patience and forbearance and is helped immeasurably by the support of some kind of community.....

THE STRENGTH TO

HOLD ON —

**Where does IT
come from ?**

We lead out -

We walk -

**We are the beginning
of what is before us -**

The values that we reach for

Seek and ye shall find -

**Believe and your faith will be
restored -**

the HOPE

STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

This article presents some key stages in the divorce/coming-out-of-marriage experience for us as women. The place to begin is in the middle. We found as we opened up and talked with each other that we as individuals had all reached a point of realizing that our efforts to cope with and understand our changing situation were a struggle for survival. This realization was painful, fought for, fought against, intense, dramatic, amazing. In our particular group, we have and had many differences - age, background, length of marriage, types of relationships and problems, fears and hopes - but to our surprise, we all had had to reach this ROCK-BOTTOM point. Seeing that we were (and are) struggling for our lives was terrifying and essential. We start by telling you this because it reveals the depth of our experiences - the context within which our efforts and feelings must be understood, the level on which we were living and having to learn to live and make decisions.

Each of us had a specific point at which we identified this realization occurring and COMING TO BE in us. We all had lived it as a DYING - we were filled with death images and ideas and fears - about ourselves, our spouses, others, the relationship.

"I curled up in bed and didn't come out for three days. I was COMFORTING MYSELF; I was working at surviving dying." *

"I went to the hospital, to the emergency room. I thought I might 'GO OUT'; I had to find some way to get up and continue.... that was my 'bottom'."

"I went deep inside and tried to find whether I could find some way to keep alive in all this pain."

"I literally crawled to the phone. I knew I had to make this effort NOW or it would be too late. I might really go beyond help, but I had to do that."

Suicide was a possibility, but the real death-fear was the fear that we might succumb to the PAIN AND SUFFERING in such a way as to be permanently damaged as whole people - that we might become a kind of walking dead. Keeping this in mind, let us tell you what we experienced and how we each came to survive this death - not that the struggle or pain is all gone; it isn't; but we are now on our way in our lives from this point, rather than still on our way into it.

Elements of the Struggle

Our own society's IMAGES OF DIVORCE were a major weight and difficulty. We had all had different previous experiences concerning divorce, ranging from a little to a lot, positive to negative, simple to complex. But, we found to our dismay as we began to try to think of ourselves and divorce that our deepest emotional images were strongly negative. We fought these

* All quotations from tape recordings of our Coming Out of Marriage Group.

images like demon wrestlers - all the while unsure if they were "true" or not, but learning slowly that they must not control our understanding. The necessity for this became clearer as we each individually felt how these images made us helpless and defeated and victimized. We had to learn how to move through such feelings but not become totally defined by them. What images can you add to the ones we found?:

divorce is "the worst possible thing"
 "failure"
 "the end of everything"
 "punishment"
 "wrong"
 "impossible"
 "all my fault"
 "a sin"
 "defeat"
 "disaster"

a divorcee is "fair game"
 "a HORRIBLE word"
 "a gay divorcee"
 "an experienced woman"
 "neurotic forever"
 "a lonely, bitter person with nothing
 to do and no friends"
 "used merchandise"
 "destructive, like a scorpion
 like a black widow spider"
 "a vacant-eyed, depressed woman"

We were thrown into a radical questioning of our past - what was our past - especially about the marriage but also about our whole self? We found ourselves thinking a great deal about our past, finally realizing that we were fumbling to CLAIM OUR PAST in some livable way. Not only did NOTHINGNESS stretch in front of us, but it yawned open behind us too. Remembering, wondering, explaining, searching - these words all describe our attempts. It was like this:

"He had spread a BLACKNESS over our years together, but they were red and yellow and blue and green. I have to find some way to keep that past that's not totally negative..... That's been my life. If I lose that, I lose me."

"I kept trying to remember who I used to be, who I was before the marriage; what kind of person had I been.....was I strong? Had I been happy?"

"Was it all a LIE; had it all been deception?"

We were frightened a lot of the time. Frightened of abandonment, rejection, weakness, pain, confusion, frightened of FACING IT. Frightened of always staying this way. All this brought us, by an erratic, confused, hesitant course, to figuring out who we really were and who we could be. WHO AM I - what are my needs, my abilities, my possibilities, my desires.....what really is my situation, how do I decide, what is my ability and capacity for survival....can I trust myself, my judgement, my perspective. Then, finally for each of us, came some time of REALLY BELIEVING IT - letting it be - deeply knowing it, seeing it into being true. We want to emphasize here that each of us were very different as to whether and to what degree we were wanting or choosing our divorce. Some of us felt it put upon us with no alternative, some of us had initiated it, some of us were wanting and not - wanting it in conflicted and confusing combinations. But, all of us felt it happen in the way we are describing. It was a kind of exhaustion point, a ceasing of avoidance. This sounds like a passive description, but what happened was at this point each of us turned some kind of corner inside and came face to face with herself as a deciding, acting, CHOOSING person. For we began to see that to survive this dying, we had to find our own way of participating in the choosing of it. This came to us in many ways:

"I found myself listening attentively to songs on the radio about surviving pain."

"I realized I would feel less like a victim if I was the one who brought it into court."

"I started to tell people about the pain. I said deep inside somewhere, it will not defeat me. It is not right or fair that I let this crush me."

"I wrote and talked to myself about it. I learned to let myself cry."

"I took off my rings."

"The doctor said I had to take up my bed and walk; that it was up to me, and I realized that that was true and that I wanted to do that."

It was only then that we each began to be able to see ourselves as getting divorced, as actually DOING IT. This was (is) difficult and complex. But now we were (are) doing it and living it from some center in ourselves. Not even that we are always in touch with that center, but that we know it is there in us. We began to trust ourselves and our reactions and ideas and feelings and needs - paying attention to what we were telling ourselves in our dreams, our feelings, our bodies, our actions. In this way, then, we face and deal with many of the arenas of the struggle - many of which still call up the deep anxieties and confusions, but also now good feelings, strengths, accomplishments. Some important arenas of struggle were not

only problems in themselves but it was a problem just accepting them as issues:

"I felt so awful that money was an issue. I kept thinking, 'Is that who I am, someone who cares about money?'"

"Telling my children and seeing it wrench them - that was hard."

"Telling my parents, telling his parents, making other people go through pain and change because we were changing."

"Dividing possessions - this wasn't (but also was) a matter of THINGS."

For all of us getting a perspective on ALONENESS was (is) central. We had to learn what our feelings really were about aloneness and loneliness.....really learning that they aren't the same; sorting out whether and how and when we were dependent and independent and what changes we needed to make; sorting out when our fears were real and when they were exaggerated. We spent a whole group meeting once talking about rape - it is a real fear to us because we are women, and for our group in particular, because we live in a large city. Some of us had never lived alone.

And slowly we each began to evolve an understanding of why WE were in this situation. We had come sooner to an understanding of what we thought about our husbands' actions - although not a complete or necessarily right understanding; but an understanding we could live with, even if it was obviously partial and subject to change. While doing this was important to us in our living, we are choosing not to focus on that in this article - men need to write their story of their struggle - if they do, this would be interesting to see how it is and isn't like ours and how it does and doesn't bear out our perceptions of them.

This story is about our struggle with finding and being ourselves. A difficult part of our understanding was to begin to see how we could not only choose this change, but how we had indeed been creators of it. Two elements clearly emerge to us. WE ARE CHANGING, GROWING, INDEPENDENT PERSONS - seeing this about ourselves and feeling this to be human and good was important. Seeing that our changing as a person (and for all of us in our group this was also connected with awareness of ourselves as women) was a part and a reason for the changing in and of the relationship. This is the positive part. The "negative" part was seeing how we UNCONSCIOUSLY CREATED changing. We call this PATTERN POWER. We found that patterns and stereotypes had a lot to do with our situation. We had all to some degree participated in the IMAGE OF MARRIAGE AS IDEAL (every marriage does, not just those that evolve in the way ours did). We saw that this Ideal had hidden some of the real relating, glossed over it:

"Suddenly I felt transformed into The Bride."

"I realized that I believed that marriage was Forever and that if something isn't forever, it's nothing - but I didn't want to believe that."

"We had fallen into pretty traditional ways of living. I cooked, he went to school, etc., without much question."

We also discovered that we had been SCREENING OUT what didn't fit. How and why this happened is still not clear to us. It is connected with an impulse to self protection and avoidance of pain, but we found that we seem to have done this (and probably this is connected with our conditioning as women) too much or at points that were too different from the image of the marriage relationship to have been thus ignored. Screening out had the function of maintaining the same picture of the relationship and explaining contradictions as exceptions or quirks. This seems connected to us with how wide communication gaps and differences in perspectives between spouses could and did develop. This is one tough element we are still figuring out. It is important to say that it is in this connection, however, this conscious and unconscious screening out, that we feel it is healthy to talk at all about our responsibility in terms of guilt - this is a feeling we are still hesitant to explore - because it is a very involved issue, because we are often taught as women to assume guilt.

One other element that is so large a theme that it can't be left out is THREAT. We found a lot of our struggling was (is) with different types of threat. The threat to ourselves of the whole experience is a theme interwoven in the above description of how we came to face ourselves, threats of negative self images, threats of continuing pain, threats of ceasing to really exist, making and receiving threats. But we also had to struggle with being a threat to others. Being a threat to our husbands - how, why, what that meant. Especially hard was (IS) being a threat to others, because pain is always threatening, and because our ending of our marriages called up this possibility to other married (and single) people, including often our own parents or children.

"I was obviously in so much pain at the time that people in my house were afraid of me. It was too painful for them to look on all that suffering."

"My married friends seemed frightened of me."

Many men also seemed to be threatened in a particular way. It is feared that we know or understand men and are therefore dangerous, less innocent, or sometimes that we are destroyers of men and inflictors of pain on men.

"Men don't want to go out with me when they learn I've been married. Some of them seem scared of something."

"And this one guy visibly moved away from me and sort of blurted out, 'I'll stay away from you then'."

But the basic threat (in ourselves and then to others) is that the ending of a marriage relationship proclaims that relationships can and do end, that there is a basic separateness and aloneness in the human condition. DIVORCE IS SCANDALOUS because it reveals the "scandal" of separate human existence which must be lived as human. No flight from this aspect of our identity can be truly successful. Relating happens between and among individuals - it does not, however much people try, abolish our individuality. Human beings are still learning to live our human separateness in healthy, happy ways and divorce raises up this fact about our being.

BREAK ON THROUGH TO THE OTHER SIDE. This is one way to describe what we have each in our own way had to do, and in breaking through we are finding this can be a good way of living. We are still in many struggles. People fear our divorces because of the feelings divorce calls up in them. We fear our new situation and our new future; we struggle with ourselves and our relationships, especially new relationships - how to form them and understand them; making real changes that are difficult and new - finding new ways to meet needs that used to be met with our husbands. But, we are changing and living as people who have again learned that we are moving, surviving, strong women who can feel happiness and pain. For us our group was a primary facilitator in learning and exploring and finding our new living. We came to it after having passed through the dying and surviving crises individually. We come from many different situations and we are going many different ways (some might marry again, others would not; some are making more career, etc., changes than others; some have communication with former spouses and others do not). But, we find that we can talk about our situations with each other in a way we cannot exactly talk with others who have not been through our particular type of pain and struggle. In this way we can explore aspects of ourselves that we need to explore. Most importantly, we can be weak with each other in a healthy way - because we see ourselves as surviving - and we need to learn not to be frightened of our weaknesses. We do not threaten each other, and we do not have to put on faces for each other. We are a way to grow, not simply a means to some sort of therapy. We don't feel we have to hang on to our group, but that it will experience a continuing natural evolution for each of us until we go into something else, because we are learning to carry our security inside. We had to learn this alone - but not in isolation.

ANG-G-XIOU-SSS

FAIRNESS

HOPE

HATE

GUILT

WORRY

WHEN
YOU'RE
ANGRY

YOU LOOK UGLY

At times

it is harder to tell about

our ANGER than our despair. Women especially

are not supposed to BE ANGRY. In our separate experiences

Despair was what pulled us down to the place where we each

realized that our struggle was a basic survival struggle and

ANGER was what helped us start to harness ENERGY to live and move

on through our crises. Our anger at first tended to be diffuse, erratic,

confused with other emotions.....our anger was not focused. Gradually

we each began to LEARN in our own individual ways that real, lived ANGER

is a healthy feeling and that if we run from it, it only turns inside and

fuels despair. We experienced our surviving as in part due to our

finally refusing in anger to be defeated. We began to be

better able to acknowledge to ourselves that we were angry,

and then to express it with others. We each have felt it

important to have friends with whom we can express our

anger as well as our many other feelings. Some people

wanted us only to be angry (they usually wanted to pick

a "side"), but we found this limited our anger and

ourselves. We are still learning. Our group

has been a place where we can learn about

anger and hear anger from each other.

We are exploring this energy.

We are now discovering how

ANGER can become

STRENGTH.

SHE'S AN ANGRY

FEAR

HOSTILITY

DEFENSIVE

DYKE

RESENT

FIST

BITCH

SHRILL

ANGER-R-R-R

you'll close off communication!

OUR ANGER: having it and
receiving it

**B
O
U
T**

- the disruption in my life
- my spouse's behavior
- my self
- circumstances
- add your own

- job
- children
- money
- other
- people
- property
- society

AND LEARNING HOW
TO EXPRESS IT
was important to each of us
as we came to
KNOW and
BE and
UNDERSTAND
and **LIKE**
OUR WHOLE SELVES

THE PROCESS OF BECOMING

In the despair

comes the re-newal

In the deep night

the sun-light

In the death

the re-birth

holding on —

letting GO !

SHAPING OUR NEW LIVING

For many of us an urgent practical decision that has to be made is where to live. We are confronted with different options, such as:

staying in the marriage home
living alone
seeking room-mates - strangers or friends
making a major move
living in a collective
"going home"
living with women only
being the only adult with our children

Our options themselves are influenced by many complex factors. Usually one choice is linked to other decisions. We are pressured by our needs concerning:

Money	Work	Play	Affection
Safety	Responsibilities		Security
Privacy	Change	Love	
Community	Contact with others		

Sometimes we consider choices we know are temporary. This may be because we want more time to decide or because other plans are not yet possible.

Often other people think they know what is best for us and pressure us toward one choice or another. The "usual" choices often seem restricting to us. It can be hard to think creatively when most people still use standard, traditional choices.

When all the factors become a confusing morass, we learned to establish some priorities. For example, a need to live alone might be important enough that we would be willing to incur greater expense. Or, our desire to take a particular job may be enough of a priority to determine where we live. Establishing priorities helps sort out the options into manageable decisions. In the process of this changing and creating new living, we are learning how our needs change and how to change them if that should seem good. What motivates some of our choices is a desire to continue to give and receive love, in both familiar and new ways.

FLYING

Sharing

Giving out

Freeing

Freedom

Free

Trusting

In touch with one's self

LOVE

To be present to

SEXUALITY

Important to each of us was taking responsibility for choices about our sexuality in new situations. We found ourselves paying attention to the sexual dimension of our lives. Sometimes we wondered if we thought about sexuality too much - which needs were real needs and which were reactions to our culture's emphasis on sex? On direct and subtle levels, we sometimes found ourselves wishing we could ignore issues and implications and quickly reach answers and satisfactions. These came up in many different contexts:

- whether or not to seek sexual experiences;
- whether or not to approach or to respond to a particular person;
- whether to continue or to discontinue a relationship;
- wondering how the sexual element influences our participation in relationships;
- wondering how to distinguish specifically sexual needs from affectional needs;
- learning to experience awkwardness in unfamiliar situations;
- being confused about what we want;
- knowing what we want but being confused about what to do;
- feeling frustration;
- wondering how openly and with whom to talk about our feelings and questions and experiences;
- experiencing the wrong and the anger of being told "what we need" while experiencing very real needs;
- fantasizing perfect solutions;
- risking.

Throughout the questions, our values were not a static, fixed factor - rather we were re-sensing our values. In reconsidering sexual relationships we took new looks at social and institutional definitions:

Marriage - Adultery - Monogamy - Promiscuity - Prostitution -
Chastity - Pornography - Affairs -

labels:

Pre-marital sex - Marital sex - Post-marital sex -
Illicit sex - free love

categorizations:

Heterosexuality - Homosexuality - Lesbianism - Bi-sexuality -
Polysexuality - "Try"-sexuality - Celibacy - Masturbation -
Transsexuality - Group sex - Etc. Etc.

add your own:

Sometimes we wondered about these things abstractly and sometimes they were acutely real and immediate to us.

The ETERNAL

In communication

communicating

hearing

Facing reality

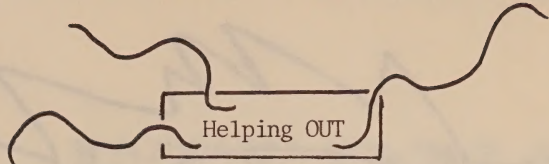
facing remembrances

I am a creator of reality

Live — out and in front of us

Go through the pain





"Ways and Means" of Problem Solving

Friends, counselors, or groups could prepare to deal, either personally or through referral to resources in the community, with both the crisis and long-term problems and changes encountered by a person coming out of marriage. One suggestion is to consider available resources, then evaluate them to see if they cover the range of possible needs.

A COLLECTION of resource people, groups, and materials might include:

INDIVIDUALS	to volunteer for meeting needs that come up (crisis care, transportation, child care, etc.); to provide a place to stay; to stay with one spouse who is alone; to provide professional services (legal, financial, etc.).
-------------	---

This type of support network is culturally sanctioned and appears spontaneously for a death; but for the grief experienced at the end of a marriage, there is often little support.

GROUPS + AGENCIES	to handle a crisis situation; to provide more long-term counseling or therapy. Look for what kind of help is being offered.
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WRITTEN MATERIALS	to answer questions about divorce; to help prevent a sense of isolation. There are publications for adults and for children.
----------------------	--

Some people to consider talking with are ones who have come out of a marriage themselves, and people trained or experienced in counseling. Those who had interest might become a self-aware group which could provide a rotating resource pool.

Things you might consider are:

1. IMMEDIATE NEEDS

In a crisis situation one doesn't need help adjusting, one needs a CHANGE in the SITUATION.

CLARIFICATION of the problems, identification of which things need immediate change, and some facilitation of the changes are crucial.

HOUSING	a place to stay temporarily; or someone to BE THERE, to be around to help hold things together.
FOOD	may be the least important consciously, making sure you get fed, making sure the family is fed.
CHILD CARE	a place for children to be; someone to meet their needs.
TRANSPORTATION	a driver and a vehicle.
MONEY	enough to meet minimum emergency needs.
PRESENCE	actual or available, someone to call.
TIME	making space and time for yourself, perhaps by being relieved temporarily of some responsibilities.
WOMEN'S GROUPS	women's centers, support groups, consciousness raising groups, action groups.

2. EXTENDED SUPPORT

Our most valuable suggestion for dealing with the overall situation of coming out of marriage is that a woman get together with other women who have shared that experience. We cannot stress too strongly that such a group can be most helpful in sharing and solving problems, and providing understanding, support and strength. We found that we were able to overcome our sense of isolation and our belief that our situations were "unique." We have put together in question form at the end of this booklet some of the topics that came up in our group.

An individual or a counselor might act as facilitator in finding or starting a group, with sensitivity toward a woman's possible desire that her circumstances not be made public. A confidential group is one way to consider your situation privately but not alone. Although the group may serve as the most supportive source of help, it should not carry the whole weight. Many of the problems we encountered individually could have been less painful, or perhaps avoided altogether, if we had had an awareness that such problems might or would be faced.

If you have not yet made your situation known to friends, a good choice might be a group of women gathered through a women's center or other referral source.

RELIGION AND DIVORCE

Women coming out of marriage are likely to encounter some religious attitudes around their divorce. These may appear directly from some religious authority, or perhaps indirectly, filtered through secular language. Women associated with a religious tradition, especially those who participate in traditional forms of religious expression (a church or synagogue) are more apt to be confronted with explicit statements or judgements about their divorce -- whether the content be negative or positive. All women coming out of marriage meet with some new groups of cultural values, which are drawn in part from religious traditions. These indirectly religious values may be more insidious in their destructive potential to women and less simple to identify since they often come from sources which seemingly have little to do with religion *per se* (such as psychologists, sociologists, families, our own internalized values) or because they have been incorporated into the definitions of the nature, structure, and expectation of relationships between or among persons.

The intent of this article is to look at how religion and divorce are connected -- to indicate some of the roots of the relationship, to notice how it operates today, and to point toward a new basis for going beyond the values for interpersonal relationships supplied by Judaism and Christianity. The purpose is not to reject the notion of a religious dimension of human interaction, nor to eliminate systematically a consciousness of such a dimension from the social-cultural structuring of group and personal living. Such a dimension is central, crucial, and potentially transformational in our lives. However, the dominant forms of religious expression in this culture - Judaism and Christianity - are patriarchal and serve to undergird sexism in society. Therefore, the values derived from these traditions, especially as they relate to female/male interaction, also serve to undermine the full being of women, and must be discarded or reformulated in order to move toward new being. It is expressly women, who have been the primary victims of patriarchally derived values, who must undertake this process of establishing our new basis for authentic relational patterns.

The predominant understanding of divorce in America today is secular, not religious -- an issue for the state, not the church. Yet since both secular and religious contexts are sexist and function to oppress women, it would be a mistake to feel that simply rejecting the religious attitudes about-divorce would be of much help to women. In fact, that is not really an option, for despite the American legal ideal of separation of church and state, the two viewpoints are actually entwined, historically and in the present. For example, civil and religious understandings of marriage are combined in our thought and in most ceremonies. The word MARRIAGE includes in its meaning both MATRIMONY, the spiritual bond, and WEDLOCK, the legal contract. Such images as "marriage before god" and "marriages made in heaven" are firmly established in our language and culture.

As the previous example shows, divorce cannot be treated separately from marriage. Divorce is implicitly defined in terms of marriage. The meanings of divorce and marriage change in relation to each other. Their fortunes rise and fall together, usually in inverse proportion. Yet marriage, not divorce, is the norm according to which these definitions change, wherein divorce reflects and supports the current understanding of marriage. Less frequently a major change in divorce structures may cause alteration in the understanding of marriage. Most importantly, divorce must be understood as a structure supportive of marriage in a social-institutional sense -- as an integral part of marriage as it functions in androcentric (male-centered) culture.

Religious claims

Religion has long standing claims on marriage and divorce. While the authority of religion has diminished, those claims remain. Religion is simply no longer the ground on which our secular culture stands. Yet for centuries society drew its reality definitions and values from religious bases, and the structure of society that grew from those roots lingers. This is especially true in marriage and divorce, for marriage and family structure have been a primary connection between theology and (non-priestly) society. The forms and values of religious understandings of marriage are a legacy frequently unquestioned, whether we define ourselves within or without a religious faith and practice.

Women who do participate in a religious tradition may encounter this legacy directly. Current religious institutions have a dual role in the divorce experience. First, the leaders and sustainers of the religious tradition are the ones who interpret biblical and doctrinal statements on divorce. Their interpretations and stance influence the institution's attitudes toward divorce and divorced persons -- setting the climate in which they experience the religious dimensions of divorce. Second, these leaders are among those most often called upon as counselors by persons considering or going through divorce. It is hardly necessary to point out that these religious leaders (rabbis, priests, ministers) are almost exclusively male, and their traditions (scriptures, theologies, ethics, etc.) have been derived from the same sex -their forefathers. Religious traditions are looked to for moral leadership, especially in times of crisis, and they have considered divorce a moral issue. In what is it grounded?

The Root of Bitterness

For both Judaism and Christianity, the Genesis stories of creation and the Garden of Eden form the scriptural basis for understanding women as originally subordinate to man, her husband. Woman is portrayed as evil and responsible for sin in the world -- sinful, guilty, and needing to be punished. These texts lead to theological and social status of women which is articulated in later passages which explicitly deal with divorce and marriage.

The Genesis basis:

The sixth day - creation of living things: Genesis I:26-27

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image and likeness to rule the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all wild animals on earth, and all reptiles that crawl upon the earth." So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (New English Bible)

Creating a companion for Adam: Genesis II:21-24

And so the Lord God put the man into a trance, and while he slept, he took one of his ribs and closed the flesh over the place. The Lord God then built up the rib, which he had taken out of the man, into a woman. He brought her to the man, and the man said:

Now this, at last --
bone from my bones,
flesh from my flesh! --
this shall be called woman
for from man was this taken.

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and the two become one flesh. (NEB)

The curse on Eve for revealing knowledge: Genesis III:16

I will increase your labour and your groaning,
and in labour you shall bear children.
You shall be eager for your husband,
and he shall be your master (NEB)

The absurdities of these stories -- such as the reversal of attributing woman's birthing ability to Adam -- have been evident to feminists. While we may dismiss these myths, they have operated as a justification for various interpretations of divorce scriptures. The disproportionate impact these myths have been given in western patriarchal cultures is partially because they were understood as literal authority, as god's revelation, and were located at the beginning of the scriptures of both Judaism and Christianity. They appealed to the patriarchal sensibility in that they serve to rationalize an oppressed status for women. They are monotonously returned to again and again by the male formulators of religious marriage and divorce law.

Although biblical pronouncements on divorce were made within and for a culture radically different from ours, and even underwent considerable change over the long biblical era itself, many of the attitudes expressed have been incorporated into our present cultural value systems. Scriptural passages relating to divorce were usually attempts to clarify, and

sometimes revise, the laws of human relationships within the religious communities to which they spoke. These statements have been interpreted and discussed by generations of religious scholars and theologians, and coalesced into religious laws and dogmas by religious men. Looking at these scriptures does not assume that they contain any intrinsic authority. The point is that the foundations of Judaic and Christian attitudes toward divorce operate today.

JUDAISM

Judaic law considered women more than "mere chattel," yet only males were assigned full adult status. Gail Shulman points out that while Talmudic laws gave women the "status of a well-loved object or a slightly retarded child"¹ compared to some other societies where women were little more than property belonging to men, early Jewish culture granted relatively higher status and freedom to women. Yet that women still essentially belonged to men is evident, for example, in the Talmudic dictum "A man's home means his wife."²

The Mishnah (oral Law on which the Talmud is based) "speaks of 'acquiring' a bride in a section which also deals with the acquisition of slaves, cattle, and property. The bride is acquired in three ways -- by money writ or intercourse -- and upon her husband's death, she is expected to marry her brother-in-law, especially if she is childless."³ The relationship described here is one of property, defined in terms of both the personal family relationships and publicly as far as the law requires a specific remarriage pattern for the intent of producing children within the males' family kinship structure.

Divorce teachings are based on Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man has married a wife, but she does not win his favour because he finds something shameful in her, and he writes her a note of divorce, gives it to her and dismisses her; and suppose after leaving his house she goes off to become the wife of another man, and this next husband turns against her and writes her a note of divorce which he gives her and dismisses her, or dies after making her his wife -- then in that case her first husband who dismissed her is not free to take her back to be his wife again after she has become for him unclean. This is abominable to the Lord; you must not bring sin upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you as your patrimony. (NEB)

Divorce is the prerogative of the man, instituted at his pleasure and for his benefit. The procedure is simple -- writing a get, the note of divorce. A simple form of this decree might be:

"She is not my wife,
And I am not her husband. (Hosea, 2:2)

Valid grounds for this "putting away" of a wife depend on interpretations of the "something shameful" (also translated "indecent in anything").

For the Shammai school of rabbis unchastity was the only grounds, while the Hillel school understood it to be a far more general category - for example serving a husband untithed food.⁴ There is no equivalent warrant for a wife to divorce her husband, nor is it assumed she might find "something shameful" in him. A woman might leave her husband under certain circumstances:

If he takes another woman, he shall not deprive
the first of meat, clothes, and conjugal rights.
If he does not provide her with these three things,
she shall go free without any payment. Exodus 21:10-11 (NEB)

However, in a Jewish court, the get is not valid unless signed by the husband. Thus, in order to divorce, the woman must proceed on a personal basis with her husband and effectively get his consent before going to court.⁵ This makes the divorce a public procedure for a man and a private and public process for a woman.

A divorced woman may be reclaimed by her husband unless she has married another man - repeated in Jeremiah 3:1 (NEB):

If a man puts away his wife
and she leaves him,
And if she then becomes another's
may he go back to her again?
Is not that woman defiled,
a forbidden thing?

This passage combines the notions of women as property and as "unclean" especially through possession -- images which lead to the concept of the divorced woman as "used merchandise."

While adultery is condemned for both women and men, it is expected that women are more responsible than men. Adultery of the wife, not the husband, ends a marriage. Adultery with a married woman is reprehensible because it violates her husband's property rights. Thus there is a sex-defined double standard which is expressed in property terms. In Judaism, divorce (as well as adultery and the inevitable "prostitute" needed to maintain the double standard) serves to support the basic property rights of husband over wife which are structured into marriage.

These laws are current for women within Judaism today. They also operate as a legacy of property and double-standard relationship which is evident in our social structure today.

CHRISTIANITY

Christian attitudes toward divorce are based on New Testament texts which have been exegeted, interpreted, canonized, and enforced in ecclesiastical and theological writings (of males) for centuries. The textual basis will first be presented, followed by indications of the main lines of interpretation.

The Jewish understanding of marriage is evident in the New Testament when Joseph, thinking Mary guilty of adultery when she became pregnant during their betrothal, "resolved to divorce her quietly" (Matthew 1:19-21). However, this expected procedure was abandoned after a dream in which Joseph was told that the pregnancy was due to the holy spirit.

The Sermon on the Mount includes a specific statement in which the Deuteronomic rule is replaced with a new teaching on divorce:

'They were told, "A man who divorces his wife must give her a note of dismissal." But what I tell you is this: If a man divorces his wife for any cause other than unchastity he involves her in adultery; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.' Matthew 5:31-32 (NEB)

The intent here is to reject the Hillel interpretation of cause for divorce as any transgression of the ritual purity or decency requirements for women, and to restrict divorce to adultery. This statement appears elsewhere in the synoptic gospels (Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18, Matthew 19:9) but only in Mark does it include the converse, "and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

The essential change, however, is not over grounds for divorce, but in the meaning of marriage:

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on any and every ground?' He asked in return, 'Have you never read that the Creator made them from the beginning male and female?' and he added, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be made one with his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. It follows that they are no longer two individuals: they are one flesh. What God has joined together, man must not separate.' 'Why then', they objected, 'did Moses lay it down that a man might divorce his wife by note of dismissal?' He answered, 'It was because your minds were closed that Moses gave you permission to divorce your wives; but it was not like that when all began. I tell you, if a man divorces his wife for any cause other than unchastity and marries another, he commits adultery.' (NEB)

Here marriage is understood to be a permanent bond, a religious bond, based in the order of creation described in the reference to Genesis I ('male and female he created them'). This new approach, which threw out the Rabbinic teachings, was considered a radical ethic at the time and a threat to Jewish authority. The Markan passage (10:11-12) which has been understood to be the oldest preserved form, omits the allowance for divorce because of adultery, and leaves no conditions for divorce or remarriage.

Divorce in the Christian tradition has been given favorable judgement only in very specific circumstances, where it is seen as a lesser evil. For example, in the sixth century, sexual abstinence was valued so highly that some favored divorce for those who decided to become celibate. Peter Lombard, in the twelfth century, viewed marriage as "remedial" -- a means of avoiding the greater evil of sexuality outside of marriage. John Colet wrote in the fifteenth century, "For marriage has no thing good in itself, save so far as it is a remedy for necessary evil." Marriage had been valued for having children but "now that the Bridegroom has come, and the truth of spiritual marriage is fulfilled, there is no longer any necessity for the married state to exist" Colet's thought was based on the belief that if everyone would convert the end would come. He scoffed at the idea that some provision should be made for having children, saying that Christians needed regeneration in Christ, not generation.

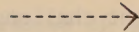
Not until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century was marriage canonized as one of the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. This was the point at which marriage ceremonies were moved from the church steps, inside toward the altar. Marriage became a means of salvation, a channel for grace. The arguments supporting the Council's decision were synthesized much earlier -- most clearly by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. The debate over marriage as a sacrament was a major point of contention between the Reformers and the traditional Roman Church, and related to the issue of whether the ecclesiastical or the civil courts should have jurisdiction over marriage and divorce. The Council of Trent marked a break between the contending views of the amount of sacred value assigned to marriage.

The groundwork for Thomas Aquinas's concept of sacramental marriage was laid earlier, notably by Augustine. Based on Paul's letter (Ephesians 5) and following the usual scholastic method of interpreting selected scriptural "proof texts" to support a theological assertion, Augustine elaborated the analogy of the unity of Christ with the Church and the unity of the husband and wife in marriage. Dominance was structured into the relationship.

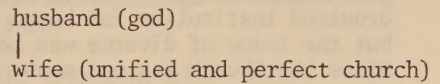
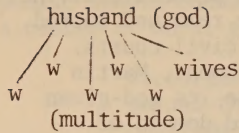
Christ	:	"groom"	:	husband	:	Male	:	Head
_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____	:	_____
Church	:	"Bride"	:	wife	:	Female	:	Body

This was seen as a new ordinance. The fact that Old Testament patriarchs had several wives (but never the reverse) was seen to have been symbolic of the multitude which would be subject under one god as several wives were to one husband. Christian marriages were limited to one wife per husband because the New Testament church of believers was to be unified and perfect toward god.

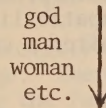
Old Testament



New Testament



Additional insight was found by the twelfth century Hugo of St. Victor who extended Augustine's analogy by adding that god rules the "soul of man" in much the same pattern. Since the soul of "man" could not be comparable to the ways in which women were ruled, the ruling power structure was clearly ordered from top to bottom:



The belief that this model of subordinate relationship for women, determined by sex and reinforced by sex roles, entrenched in the marriage relationship, was a mystery and a sacrament is the basis of the Christian doctrine of the permanent "indissolubility of marriage" legally maintained in the Roman Catholic Church. The expectation is that women are to play the part of the submissive Christian attitude -- toward both god and their husbands. This belief is culturally retained, and expressed in Protestantism, in the "till death do us part" commitment of marriage ceremonies.

Because of this doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage, the Roman Catholic Church had no definition of divorce. However, marriages were ended by separation ("from bed and board") or absolute annulment. Thus while divorce was not strictly possible, its function was assumed in other forms. Remarriage became possible after absolute annulments which meant there never was a marriage in the first place. Annulments were justified for a great variety of "impediments." The abuses that resulted, such as "buying" annulments, were among the reasons that it came under attack by reformers. Other reasons were alternative scriptural and theological interpretations. For instance, some claimed the strictness demanded was unfair to men, who, they fretted, could potentially suffer by being married to a wife guilty of parricide (father murder), poisoning, or witchcraft. It was argued that remarriage, when it would lead to a better marriage, was preferable to strictly adhering to the law, which was presented as an ideal. For this another popular analogy was drawn between Christ's initial bond to the synagogue, which became an adulteress and was divorced by Christ, and Christ's remarriage to the more perfect New Testament Church.

The Protestant Reformers did not challenge the sex-role subordination of women in marriage. Nor did marriage lose status as the primeval, divinely ordained institution for human relationships. Marriage remained sacred, but the issue of divorce was believed to belong to the civil courts. Since the Church was not meant to be the agent of punishment, Martin Luther felt that the civil agency was responsible to use its god-given power to punish those guilty of transgressing the sacred domain of marriage. While the spiritual bond of marriage was a holy and crucial thing, marriage relationships were, from his male-centered point of view, "a secular and outward thing, having to do with wife and children, house and home, and with other matters that belong to the realm of government, all of which have been completely subjected to reason."⁷

The secular model for divorce was presented by Thomas More in his Utopia (16th century). His ideal community would provide civil divorce through the Senate for what we would call incompatibility ("insufferable perverseness") or by mutual consent, but only after a careful inquiry by the "Senators and their wives" (!).

From this brief look at the religious roots, it is evident that Jewish understandings of marriage and divorce arise from and sustain patriarchal values. The forms which these values define structure property relationships which garner ownership and economic power for the male. Christianity, while attempting to destroy distinctions between male and female in (male) Christ, nevertheless makes sacred in marriage male dominance over females.

Both traditions represent women as spiritually inferior to men, and translate this fundamental theological double standard into their teachings and social forms. Both tend toward "justification" of males over females in divorce because women are seen as inherently evil (Eve). Although punishment for males who transgress the moral bounds of the relationship is declared, in fact both religious and civil courts remain male controlled.

The Legacy Today

Several examples have shown that as marriage is devalued, the sinfulness or stigma of divorce is lessened. Conversely, as marriage is defined as the norm, divorce becomes anathema. It is interesting to note that the sixteenth century, when marriage became a Christian sacrament, saw the rise of the family as we know it today - defined primarily as a couple and their children. Previously the family had served as the channel for property, names, and life. Individuals lived in society, not in the family. By the 18th century, society discovered the time of childhood, and the purpose of the home was refocused. It became the center of privacy, isolation, comfort and domesticity -- presided over by the woman/wife/mother and dedicated to the education of (male) children. With these increasing pressures on the home and marriage came an increase in divorce. The institution of divorce served as a safety valve to preserve the institution of marriage. The 19th century romanticism of

the "ideal home" as the sacred preserve of moral values in a "corrupt" public sphere endowed the wife-mother with the sacred charge of maintaining a center of moral good. William O'Neill writes:

Victorian taboos against the candid treatment of sexual themes have largely crumbled. But the social position of American women is not greatly different from what it was at the end of the nineteenth century, and the Victorian family system has demonstrated an astonishing durability. Mass divorce, therefore, now seems to me to have been not the leading edge of a moral revolution so much as the first of a series of adjustments by which the patriarchal family and the Protestant sexual ethic have accommodated themselves to the demands of an urban, industrial society.¹⁰

Thus divorce is only superficially the opposite of marriage. Actually it is supportive of marriage. Therefore to fixate in a simple way on divorce without challenging the fundamental ideas about human relationships implicit in its structure, will have little effect on the dominant social norms. This would prove as meaningless as the efforts of many women in the 19th century to exalt marriage and the family-as-foundation-of-society ideas. Women, assigned the duty of self-sacrifice and supportive partial being, have been the ones to bear the cost of this system.

New Categories

A recent popular book on Divorce contained no mention of religious dimensions of divorce aside from routine inclusion of pastoral counselors as among the counseling services available to divorcing people. It was what one might call a thoroughly "secular" treatment of divorce. The title of the book, Uncoupling: The Art of Coming Apart, indicates that it was an effort to ease the process of divorce.¹¹ That title evokes the image of two railroad cars being uncoupled. Taken a bit further, the divorce courts would be the railroad yard roundhouse, efficiently uncoupling the cars, shunting them off to a side rail briefly, then hooking them up again in new combinations to go back down the same track. The problem here is that making divorce more mechanically efficient does little to alter the well worn tracks along which it runs. While it certainly may ease the process individually, it diverts attention from the source of the problem -- institutional marriage. A secular approach to marriage and divorce in sexist culture is much the same as the approach of religious traditions in that both function to oppress women. The civil courts have replaced the religious courts, and there are striking similarities between the robed male judges of family courtrooms and the church judges of the inquisition, whose authority the state has replaced.¹²

Discussion of divorce often raises the distinction between marriage as the personal "relationship" between the woman and man and marriage the "institution" -- the social-legal structure. Divorce is then understood in two parts -- the transformation of the personal relationship and the dissolution of the contract which takes place in the civil courts. In fact this distinction is often discovered by women as they come out of marriage because the legal divorce decree does not usually coincide with the experience of the ending of the personal relationship.

While this distinction is useful, it is oversimplified. Modeled after the public-private distinction so dear to American legal and economic theories, this division assumes that in fact the separation can be neatly made. While dividing points could probably be found in individual cases, what is considered personal and what is seen as institutional varies so greatly from person to person that in general new categories are needed. The personal relationship aspects of marriage cannot be clearly cordoned off from the social-functional aspect of marriage. Whatever the personal relationship may be, it is functionally limited by the marriage. While there is always the possibility of transcending the social-cultural definitions of interpersonal relationships, that is especially difficult within marriage -- for marriage is a central point in which women are defined as subordinate to men. In fact, marriage is embedded in a complex welter of related structures and role expectations, crucial to the maintenance of sexist society. Essentially marriage mediates against authentic being for women, and thus has severe limitations for authentic possibilities of personal relationship.

New Norms

Our culture is deeply imbued with a "marriage ethos." One is expected to have a "marital status" of some sort, defined in terms of marriage. The legacy of marriage seen as the natural order of creation (Genesis I) has created a norm of heterosexual monogamy for adult life. This norm devalues the many other relationship patterns which persons experience, particularly same sex relationships. For women marriage sometimes disguises the fact of our inequality, by giving us status through men. The marriage norm has also hindered relationships among women by devaluing female-female relationships (whether sexual or not) while women are isolated in individual (men's) homes. Social structures of work and economic power facilitate male-male relationships which serve to perpetuate male power without threatening the marriage norm.

Women are defined in terms of relationships which come from marriage and family structures far more than men. Thus women experience divorce as a profound redefinition of themselves -- one which confronts them with different social options. In rejecting marriage as the norm for interpersonal definitions, women will encounter fewer barriers to relating with each other. A new ethic must be sought within the experience of collectively exploring and developing new norms within our lives as women.

NOTES

1. Gail Shulman, "View from the Back of the Synagogue: Women in Judaism," in Sexist Religion and Women in the Church, ed. Alice L. Hageman in collaboration with The Women's Caucus of Harvard Divinity School (New York: Association Press, 1974), p. 144.
2. Yoma, 2b.
3. Shulman, p. 150 (see The Mishnah, Nashim, Kiddushin, 1:1, p.321).
4. Their respective rulings: The School of Shammai say: A man may not divorce his wife unless he has found unchastity in her... And the School of Hillel say: He may divorce her even if she spoiled a dish for him -- The Mishnah, Nashin, Gitten 9:10.
5. Shulman, p. 151.
6. V. Norskov Olsen, The New Testament Logia on Divorce, (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1971).
7. Luther's Works, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955 ff.), vol. XXI, p. 93.
8. Ideal Commonwealths (London, 1901) p.70.
9. Philip Aries, Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life (New York, 1962).
10. William L. O'Neill, Divorce in the Progressive Era, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Pr., 1967), p. viii.
11. Norman Sheresky and Marya Mannes, Uncoupling: the Art of Coming Apart, (New York: Viking Press, 1972).
12. Conversation with Carol Delaney, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1974.

Q?U?E?S?T?I?O?N?S??

QUESTIONS

These questions might be helpful - for starting discussion in a group and for thinking individually. It is not a complete list and not all questions will be appropriate to everyone's situation. They reflect many different stages in the process of coming out of marriage. We found these questions all coming up in different ways at different times in our group.

Other things we found helpful in our group were:

1. Tape recording our discussions and listening to them later. We learned new things about ourselves in this way. (All discussions and tapes were confidential to the group.)
2. Trying to meet regularly even if we couldn't all be there all the time.
3. Meeting at our different living places when that was possible.
4. Accepting new people into our group as we heard about each other.

What is my situation right now?

What are my feelings about divorce?

What are my images about divorced people?

What do I know about how to get a divorce?

Have I told anyone about my situation? Whom have I told and what have I told? How did it come up?

How am I feeling about myself?

What depresses me? What do I do when I'm depressed?

What frightens me? What do I do when I'm frightened?

What makes me happy? What do I do when I'm happy?

How do I feel about being alone?

When am I alone? What do I do then?

When am I with people? Who are they and what is that like?

What was important to me in the marriage relationship?

What reassures me about myself?

How are friends reacting?

Will I change my name? And to what might I change it?

In what subtle and obvious ways is marriage an institution? How do I feel about this?

What times (such as holidays) are particularly crucial for me?

When do I feel jealousy? How do I handle that?

Does religion or church affect my situation? How?

How do I feel about memories?

How do I see my past now?

How do I make plans?

How do my moods change?

How do I feel my marriage was like other marriages? How was it different?

What are my abilities? What can I utilize positively in my life?

What are my fantasies like? Which ones do I act upon?

What is my job like? Or school? Where will I live?

Do I think about suicide? When?

Do I think about death? When?

What is my understanding of what is happening?

What do I think my (ex)spouse's understanding is?

How and why are my (ex)spouse and I communicating, or not communicating?

What role is money playing in my situation? And possessions?

How are the children affected? What are my relationships with them like now?

How are my parents affected? What are my relationships with them like now?

What about other relatives?

In what ways am I dependent? Which are good ways and which are bad ways?

What things confuse me? And how does this make me feel?

How does my being a woman affect my situation?

What are my dreams like?

What are my needs? Which are being met and which are not?

What threatens me?

Who threatens me? Whom do I threaten?

How am I feeling physically? Do I feel tensions? How do I care for my body?

Am I making new relationships? What is that like?

What is hardest for me?

What do I think I'm doing right?

What changes have I already made?

What do I feel resentment about? How do I handle that?

Do I cry? When?

Am I angry? When? How do I express it?

Do I have guilt feelings? About what?

When do I feel love?

When do I feel hate?

What are my sexual feelings? Expressions/actions?

When do I feel grief? Loss?

When do I feel abandoned? Rejected? Abandoning? Rejecting?

Are there any other people I see as significantly involved in the marriage ending?

What previous experience have I had with divorce?

Have I thought about divorce before?

Why did I get married?

What do I want to happen?

What immediate decisions do I face?

What long range decisions do I face?

Readings and Suggestions

The reading we found most helpful dealt with seeing ourselves in new ways - autobiographies and biographies of women; novels by women; poetry; books on loneliness, surviving crisis, self-renewal. Sometimes we researched specific information we needed, such as laws about court proceedings, our actual legal rights, etc.

We found ourselves writing to ourselves in journals, and poems, and letters, recording our experiences and emotions. Drawing was another means of understanding our experience. In coming out of marriage, many of us created new avenues of self-expression.

You might want to create your own collection of readings, or gather information about legal issues, or start your own writing, or make a collection of things you find beautiful.....

While we can't give a complete list of books, articles, periodicals and materials available about divorce, here are some basic resources to begin with:

Women in Transition: A Feminist Handbook on Separation and Divorce, by Women in Transition, Inc., (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1975). \$6.95. This hefty book includes a good bibliography and state-by-state listings of women's groups and organizations.

State by State Guide to Women's Legal Rights by Shana Alexander. (Wollenstonecraft, Inc. 1975. 6399 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048).

Massachusetts Woman's Divorce Handbook by Isabella Jancourtz, Atty. \$3.00 60 pages. (P.O. Box 743, Weston, MA 02193).

How to Do Your Own Divorce in California by Charles E. Sherman. (Nolo Press, P.O. Box 2147, Berkeley, CA 94702) \$4.95 + .35 postage. (Contains legal forms.)

Getting Out: A Collective Experience in Self-Help Divorce by the Women's Legal Center of San Francisco. \$1.75

Houseworker's Handbook by Betsy Warrior and Lisa Leghorn. (c/o The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139) \$1.00.

Wife Beating and Crimes Against Women by Betsy Warrior. (c/o The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139) \$1.00.

Booklet for Women Who Wish to Determine Their Own Names After Marriage compiled by the Center for A Woman's Own Name, 2325 Oak Street, Berkeley, CA 94708. \$2.00.

We also suggest that you contact your local chapter of NOW (National Organization for Women) and check your local library for more resources. If you have found this booklet useful, you might ask your librarian to order it.



WORDS ARE IMPORTANT

Not long ago I talked with a woman about DIGNITY. Although she had heard of the organization and had even attended a Mass sponsored by DIGNITY, she was surprised to learn of my involvement. She was under the impression that DIGNITY was an organization for men. The predominance of men and the language used at the liturgy gave her the impression that women were not welcome.

The use of male gender language contributed to the alienation of this woman. Though many people are comfortable with sexist language, there are men and women who find it distracting to their worship and a cause for anger and alienation. Gathering at the Eucharistic table is a sign of our unity. Therefore we must be concerned with anything that would separate us from one another.

Language has a powerful influence in our lives. Our words help shape reality as we see it. They let others know our basic attitudes and prejudices. Words help build the bridges of our communication to others. However, our words can convey a meaning that we do not intend.

Most of us do not remember when we first began to talk. Language is usually learned effortlessly and almost unconsciously. For this very reason we often fail to see the hidden meaning of many words and expressions. Our task then is to re-evaluate what our language is really saying. What is the hidden message we convey? By our use of language are we reinforcing the stereotypes of female inferiority and male superiority? Do our words make women invisible? The terms 'man' and 'men' have become so intimately tied to the meaning of male person that they can no longer be considered broad enough to apply to all people. Do the words we use cause some women or minorities to be alienated from our community? Have the words we use in our prayers made God too small? God is transcendent, why then do we refer to God as male?

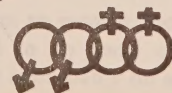
Words are important. If we want our organization to reflect the Gospel imperative of justice and if we are to heed Jesus' call of unity and freedom, then we must be concerned with language. For it is our language which reflects our commitment to the affirmation of the value and dignity of each person.

GUIDELINES FOR LANGUAGE IN LITURGY

1. Generic words such as man, men, mankind, and all men should be replaced with words that explicitly include everyone.
Men - us, people.
Brothers - neighbors, people, persons.
Fathers - ancestors, forerunners, parents, precursors, forebearers.
Mankind - humanity, human race, people.
Fellowship - community, family.
2. The use of the male pronouns reinforce the idea of male dominance. Whenever possible avoid the use of 'he', 'him', and 'his' by using plural pronouns or using 'one' or by the use of the second person.
3. If the Scripture of the day calls for a passage with sexist attitudes, there are two alternatives:
 - a. substitute another passage.
 - b. explain the passage carefully, e.g., Paul's cultural conditioning, the assumptions of the era. Do not use sexist passages without explanation.
4. Readings - Read the Scriptures in sexually balanced language.
5. Prayers - Use sexually balanced language, e.g., not "pray brothers" but "pray brothers and sisters", not "for all men" but "for all people" or "for all".
6. Use of nonsex specific words for God, such as Spirit, Wisdom, Holy One, Eternal One, Sustainer, Creator, Advocate, Defender or Redeemer.
7. Names for God should avoid "excessive" use of male imagery e.g., King, Master, and Father. Possible alternatives, Yahweh, Mother/Father, Parent, 'Abba God' or by repeating the word God.
8. Avoid sexist hymns. If sexist language in a hymn can't be changed, substitute another hymn. The St. Louis Jesuits are coming out with corrected versions of their songs which eliminate gender problems.

(Some of the ideas in these guidelines were taken from "Guidelines for Religious Language" Published by the Quixote Center.)

Marybeth
DIGNITY/Chicago



The Words of Worship: Beyond Liturgical Sexism

Our growing awareness of the sexist problems inherent in our language provides us with a valuable new hermeneutical tool.

JAMES F. WHITE

† THE PROBLEM of sexist language in worship has caught up with us; there is no avoiding it any longer, though I still hear many evasions. The most common excuse: "Language is not that important." My usual rejoinder: "How long has it been since you last used the term 'nigger'?" So long as someone uses that less-than-human term for a black person, it is impossible for him or her to progress toward racial justice. Language is not an indifferent matter, as Earl Butz discovered. A change in speech habits is necessary if we are to change attitudes.

No longer do we have a choice to be concerned or not about sexist language. A fundamental issue of justice is involved, and the church cannot be silent in matters of justice without being a disobedient church. Obedience to Christ means according justice to others just as we desire justice for ourselves. To determine what constitutes justice in this instance, to be sure, may not be simple, but we should have little difficulty in agreeing that an obedient church has no choice about opposing injustice.

The importance of public worship in this matter is only slightly less obvious. Nowhere else does the average Christian so frequently take part in explicit theological statements and actions as in Christian worship. Nothing helps form a Christian's thinking about God and one's responsibility to others so persistently as continued engagement in public worship. Worship shapes the theology of the laity through the weekly repetition of constant elements of worship plus unique local and temporal elaborations of them by the gathered community.

Feminine Images

Let us begin with the good news. Our growing awareness of the sexist problems inherent in language provides us with a valuable new hermeneutical tool. It opens to us aspects of God's word to which we have hitherto been deaf and provides us with a deeper sensitivity for hearing what God says through Scripture. One soon realizes the importance of accurate biblical translations. Frequently the original texts make no indication of gender; it has been supplied gratuitously by translators. This is

true of the pronoun *tis*, often translated "a man" instead of "anyone." In many cases, sexual distinctions have been dubbed in for the sake of readability by modern translators when these distinctions do not exist in original texts. More nearly accurate translations would not make such arbitrary distinctions. Such knowledge ought to be an incentive to more intensive study of the Scriptures in the original languages.

But there is a more important level of awareness, sensitive to the variety of metaphors in which Scripture refers to God in feminine images. Jesus, for instance, in an image rarely used in worship, refers to himself as wishing to gather people together as a "mother: hen gathers her brood under her wings" (Matt. 23:27, Luke 13:34). Only one who has kept chickens can know how protective a mother hen is and what a marvelous image she is of divine protectiveness. In the prologue to John's Gospel, translators shy away from an exact rendition of the last verse (1:18), which says literally, "God's only begotten, he who is in the Father's breast." The word *kolpos* (breast) rarely makes it into English, the RSV being an exception here. Apparently even the faint suggestion of female anatomy for God troubles us, though anthropomorphisms abound in Scripture.

We feel uncomfortable with such passages as Deuteronomy 32:18: "You forsook the creator who begot you and cared nothing for God who brought you to birth." Jesus compares his death and resurrection to labor pains and childbirth (John 16:21). Much of our theology of Christian initiation might be more balanced if the image of new birth had developed throughout history as did images of incorporation or forgiveness. New birth is equally as prominent for initiation in the New Testament. Baptismal regeneration became a most controversial term, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. A positive approach to the birth images in baptism (John 3:5, Titus 3:5) gives an important dimension to God's gift of new life in the body of Christ.

Prenatal and Postnatal Events

Protestantism has yet to recover those aspects of Christology witnessed to by some of the minor christological feasts. It is probably no accident that,

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despite widespread recovery of much of the Christian year, Protestants have not seen much value yet in the feasts of Naming, Presentation, Annunciation and Visitation. The biblical evidence, of course, is in the first two chapters of Luke, but there is far more there than just shepherds and angels. Prenatal and postnatal events are part of the history of salvation, though we ignore them. The Annunciation (March 25) has had powerful appeal to the greatest painters of past ages; we have looked in another direction, though this feast once signaled the start of the civil year. It still marks the beginning of the climactic event in the salvation of the whole human race. And it is entirely in the hands of a woman. Traditionally an angel is sexless, and the only other person in Luke 1:26-38 is a woman, Mary. There are parallels with her kinswoman, Elizabeth — John is not the only forerunner. Visitation (May 31) has intrigued musicians with the *Magnificat*. In the *Magnificat* the social creed of the Christian church is articulated in its most concise form — all in the context of a dialogue between two peasant women (Luke 1:39-56).

The postnatal stories are too good to miss, too. The Naming of Jesus (Luke 2:21) stresses Christ's identification with human society, particularly in receiving a common Hebrew name on the eighth day (January 1). The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:22-38) on the 40th day (February 2) is the first event in which humans proclaim the meaning of the Christ child. And that proclamation comes first from the lips of the elderly — a man and a woman, Simeon and Anna. What a difference it would have made if the church had based its theology of ordination on these two prototypal proclaimers of God's word! I cite these passages only to show rich images that we would probably not have overlooked if they had been masculine. Fresh sensitivity to the female role in the process of salvation will help us discover other elements in God's word which we have missed.

Limiting God, Limiting People

There seem to be two stages in applying our sensitivity about sexist language in worship: the negative stage of eliminating exclusive language and the positive one of developing language that affirms both sexes. Unfortunately, most who have worked in this field have been content with the first of these. *Actually we need language even more explicitly sexual than that we now use — language that affirms both sexes in our knowledge of God and of humanity.*

The negative stage, of course, is very important. It comes in the realization that the English language has definitely changed in the past decade and that such terms as "man," "mankind," "men" and the masculine pronouns are no longer being used in the familiar generic sense. This change has been recog-

nized by the National Council of Teachers of English, a group more likely to acknowledge current usages than to initiate new ones.

The negative stage has two implications for the language of worship. First of all, it becomes increasingly problematic to limit God to masculine images — and the words "he," "his" and "himself" are no longer so inclusive as they once were. Words that imply that God is masculine, as these pronouns now do, are much more restrictive and limiting in naming God than such terms were in the past. Today a hymn, a prayer or creed that uses these pronouns says something much more narrow than it did a decade ago. Since we hardly want to set limits to God, these words must be replaced by more inclusive language. This task challenges us to broaden our comprehension of the deity. The Section on Worship of the United Methodist Church has published a list of 200 ascriptions for God. Perusal of this fascinating document can lead to an expansion of our language for addressing God and our comprehension of the Giver of Love. The first step is the purgative one of eliminating language that is now exclusively male in our speech about the Redeemer of Israel.

Second, the same negative stage is necessary with language regarding people. In the past, it meant one thing to say "who for us men and for our salvation." Today, that phrase means something quite different. The new International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) translation, now used by many denominations, says "for us and for our salvation." There is no more need to limit people today than to limit God. The negative step means pruning away terms that are exclusive in present use: "man,"

Annunciation

✦ DOWN! downward plummets Gabriel
in his annual flight
on spangled wings, his voice of gold,
his visage silver-bright.

But Mary greets him with a yawn,
a cold, inquiring, "Well?"
until he fairly cowers to say
the joy he came to tell,

And stammers in his voice of gold,
the jeweled jaw shocked shut,
when Mary in her voice of brass
shrugs and snaps, "So what?"

Poor Gabriel! He blurts the news,
and flaps away, unsure,
for modern-day Magnificats
are not what once they were!

GLORIA MAXSON.

"men," "mankind." Salvation is for all, not for just one sex, as these words now imply.

Inclusive Terms

The positive stage, on the other hand, is both more creative and more difficult. It is the phase in which we develop inclusive terms for our understanding of God and for our speech about humanity. It implies an even more explicitly sexual language than we now use, but a language in which female and male terms are balanced. It means that when God created us in God's own image, we were created male and female. We do not seek a gray, sexless imagery, as if God created us neuter, but the rich coloration of both sexes. This effort is not easy; it is simpler to follow the familiar monochrome. But when we take this step, we soon find that our visions of both God and humanity are greatly expanded.

How do we reach this creative stage? We begin with Scripture and tradition. We find, once we start looking, traces scattered everywhere of the female side of God, the feminine half of humanity. Eleanor McLaughlin reminds us that Chrysostom could call God "Sister, Mother" and Anselm could pray to Jesus as Mother. It helps to know that Chrysostom and Anselm could do it. We need to recall the medieval debates on the Christian life as reflecting either Mary or Martha. Our first steps must be taken on familiar ground but with a keenness of sight we have never had before. We must discover the femi-

Dark Advent

+ BEGUILLED by cold we enter winter's ark,
the sky behind us narrowing to wink.
In vain we hold a candle in this dark.

The solstice reaches in its falling arc
far as rank clouds can stretch or sun can sink.
Beguiled by cold we enter winter's ark.

We probe for life in evergreen's dry bark,
but limbs are strung with needles black as ink.
In vain we hold a candle in this dark.

We hope through laughter to engage a spark,
but ice has frozen humor's ductile link.
Beguiled by cold we enter winter's ark.

With groping faith a savior's birth we mark,
since Mary's term is ending now, we think.
In vain we hold a candle in this dark,

for virgin birth's induced by song of lark
and virgin milk is summer's warming drink.
Beguiled by cold and locked in winter's ark,
in vain we hold a candle in this dark.

KATHRYN CHRISTENSON.

nine images already available in Scripture and tradition before we can develop new ones.

A word of caution may be helpful. It now seems that more recent materials, especially hymns, are the worst linguistically. Not until the 20th century did hymnists get aroused about the brotherhood of man. Victorians were not concerned about "lesser breeds without the law." But the "good guys" of the social gospel could cry: "Join hands, then, brothers of the faith," meaning something twice as inclusive as those words now signify. Others could sing: "Till sons of men shall learn thy love," or "The voice of God is calling/ Its summons unto men," not realizing how exclusive those lines would sound today. Someone has suggested that we need to change only one letter in another hymn: "Wise up, O men of God!" All these and many more hymns now suggest the opposite of what they intend. Consequently, they may have to go unsung for a time.

What do we do with much of the older hymnody and language of prayer? I do not believe that it should all be discarded, though one can be more selective in choosing it. There are plenty of alternatives to singing "Good Christian Men, Rejoice." But even that can be mended once people learn to substitute "folk" for "men," "one" for "man," and "humans" for "mankind." In so doing, we are really reinforcing the writer's intentions by translating a previous language into a present one. And there are some surprisingly good words we never before appreciated, such as the 15th century "O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing." The translations of the International Consultation on English Texts will be helpful for creeds, canticles, doxologies and the Lord's Prayer. One can check the new *Episcopal Book of Common Prayer* (1976) or the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978) to see ways by which exclusive sexist language has been avoided, though less intentionality in providing language that affirms both sexes seems evident.

Acknowledging the Limits

There is bad news, too. We need to know the limits before we can do anything responsibly new in worship. There are some things we ought to do that we have not done; there are also things that we ought not to do. It is only by knowing the limits that we can get a more radical view of unexplored possibilities.

First of all, we are not free to rewrite Scripture. There is no doubt that the world view within which it was written was patriarchal. We must be careful to distinguish between those things that were culturally contingent and those things which are essential to the gospel. Paul says many things about women which reflect his culture. But he also makes what must be the most radically egalitarian statement in all of Scripture, in Galatians 3:27-28: "Baptized into union with him [Christ], you have all put on Christ

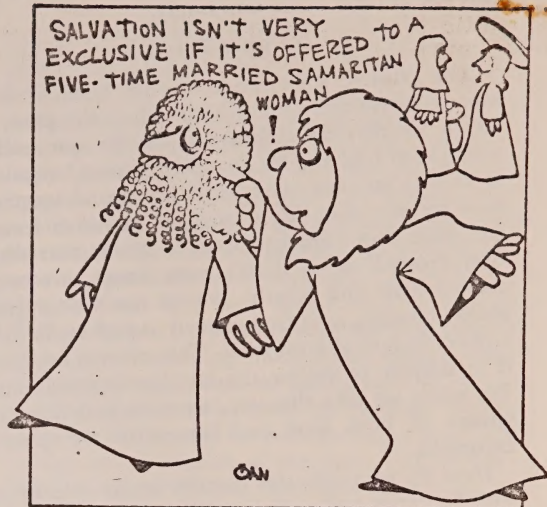
as a garment. There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus." This equality is based on baptism. It does not hurt to know that women baptized persons in the early church, that fonts have been designed in the shape of a pregnant woman, that womb imagery is clear in the Easter vigil, or that Calvin and Wesley, on the other hand, were vehemently opposed to women baptizing. The more we look, the more we find.

But Scripture cannot be rewritten, though it frequently deserves retranslation. *Anthropos* can be translated "human being" instead of "man," but we cannot use *anér* as anything but "man." I do not think we can change the word "Father" when it appears in Scripture. But, as indicated above, we have numerous possibilities for addressing God in prayer. I now realize it was wrong of me for many years always to begin grace at the family table with the words "Heavenly Father," especially with my three daughters and wife present. I had countless other options and never exercised them. How narrow an image of God that one ascription now implies! My images of God have grown since I began reaching out for alternatives to that invariable "Heavenly Father."

We are not free to avoid the masculinity of Jesus Christ, who, as a concrete human individual, had to have sexuality. But the important thing is not that Jesus became man but that he became human, one of us with whom every woman and man can identify. Thus the clause in the creed of the United Church of Canada, "who has come in the true Man, Jesus," no longer means what it did in 1969. The important thing is that God became human, not that God became masculine. Still, I do not yet see any alternatives to referring to the second member of the Trinity as "he" or "him."

God-Talk and People-Talk

Okay, those are the limits; but what are some of the possibilities in actual worship language? Pronouns give us the most trouble. Many times our prayers would be greatly improved by rigorous excision of any third-person pronouns. Simply say "you" when speaking of God, and in almost all cases it will be a better prayer by being made vocative. Of course, this language will not work in parts of the service not addressed to God. Here we can change "God . . . he" to "God . . . God" or to some such naming as "God . . . our Sovereign." "God . . . his" can give way to "God . . . God's" or some such possessive as "God . . . our Sovereign's." The really difficult pronoun is the reflexive. I have turned "God . . . himself" into "God . . . Godself." I admit I do not like neologisms, but I find that, with use, "Godself" becomes less abrasive and reminds me that I am speaking of a God who is more than masculine. The easy way is to avoid the reflexive



altogether, but I am fond of speaking of God as giving Godself to us (as in the sacraments), and nothing other than a reflexive is strong enough to say that adequately.

With regard to humans, we have many possibilities. I do not find it strained to double pronouns; I do not mind saying "he or she" or "hers or his" or "him or her" every time a third-person pronoun is necessary. I do not like "he/she" or "s/he," as one does not speak slashes. Written language, in my opinion, should correspond with spoken, not vice versa.

There is also a wide variety of instances in which it is not awkward to say "women and men." In Chaucer's time the words "brethren" and "sistren" were both used, but the latter was lost (about 1550), to our impoverishment. More inclusive terms ought to be used if it is clear that such is intended ("poet" and "Jew" rather than "poetess" and "Jewess," which happen to be diminutives). Words that now clearly indicate sex ("man," "mankind") should be balanced with their parallels ("woman," "woman-kind"). If such exclusive terms cannot be balanced, then it is better to avoid them in preference for single inclusive terms such as "people" and "humanity."

It should be clear that we have just begun to explore new possibilities both in God-talk and people-talk. There are no ready-made answers. Some things will sound awkward for a while, just as, not so long ago, addressing God as "you" did. Familiarity soon makes novelties sound natural. "Godself" may not bother us for long, or we may find a better reflexive. But I am convinced that we cannot remain content with "God himself" much longer.

A search which begins because of the imperative of justice may have major side effects in helping us come to a more profound knowledge of God and the

people of God. Such a search can stretch our concepts and understanding of God in unexpected ways. And it can put us in deeper contact with our own humanity. We may find that, in trying to give others their due, we ourselves receive as much in return. The concern about sexist language is a major means for changing attitudes.

There are plenty of nonverbal changes needed in worship — some as elementary as moving beyond

preaching robes with padded shoulders (an irrelevant masculine image of ministry), using women and children as ushers, and electing female bishops. But words are certainly among our most important formative elements. The present birth pangs of the church are a sign of health. We must move to language that affirms both women and men. Together, both constitute the world that Christ came to save. □



Hawthorne's The Lily's Quest,
Temple and Tomb

P

A

Stephanie Bigusiak
American Literature
Dr. R. Lycette
December 12, 1971
M. W. F. - 11:00

The Lily's Quest has received little notice amongst the stories of Hawthorne. F. O. Matthiessen places it among "the more anemic Tales," where it becomes an occasion for wonder that Hawthorne, in 1839 reading extensively in science, religion, and philosophy, could at the same time produce fiction so unaspiring and lacking an intellectual excitement.¹ Rudolph von Abele groups this tale with others notable for "the naturalism of their symbolic apparatus," likening them to "those compendious paintings of Breughel illustrative of folk-proverbs or of children's games,"² but an analysis does not follow this provocative idea.

This does much harm to the work; for Hawthorne's overpowering sense of mortality does make it an interesting story in a sense that sets him apart from his contemporaries. In Hawthorne's sensitivity to death there is something primitive that seems stronger than the attitudes of Puritan religion. It is this feeling that the tale dramatizes. The Lily's Quest begins as a graceful exercise in allegory and ends as a paradoxically joyful Hymn to Death. The tale compels us to look at the intimate involvement of life in the reality of death. In Hawthorne everything lives in the heightened consciousness of death. There is a moderate mood in which joys and sorrows are deepened and shadowed.

1. F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance, (New York: Crofts, 1941) p. 231.

2. Rudolph von Abele, The Death of the Artist: A Study of Hawthorne's Disintegration (The Hague, 1955) p. 29.

This balance is achieved in The Lilies' Quest through the building of a dramatic equation between the "Temple of earthly joy" that is the object of the quest of two lovers and the tomb that becomes the site of their temple; the temple is literally superimposed upon the tomb. In form the tale has a simple, threefold progression, tracing the pilgrimage of Adam Forrester and Lilius Fay in their search for happiness. They agree to build their temple on the site approved by Walter Gascoigne, a gothic figure wrapped in gloom, who has fits of madness, who is described as a "relative" of Lilius, he haunts their quest, warning them away from the first two sites that they choose. With "an inscrutable smile," he approves their third choice, and the lovers assume that his approval is "a token that here had been no footprint of guilt or sorrow to desecrate the site of their Temple of Happiness."³

At this point, with no evident shift in tone, the tale gains in complexity as Hawthorne hints at the ignorance of Adam and Lilius. The self-deception to which innocence is partial is indicated in their response to this site: "Adam Forrester and Lilius had carelessly thrown their eyes around, and perceived that the spot where they had chanced to pause possessed a quiet charm, which was well enough adapted to their present mood of mind."⁴ The key word is carelessly, for it cues the reader to what the lovers fail to observe - that the site with its existing "ancestral mansion" is in fact a house of death.

A reluctance to name what is seen is present in Hawthorne's

3. Hawthorne's Works, (Riverside Edition: Boston), c. 1845, p. 45.

3. Hawthorne's Works, (Riverside Edition: Boston), c. 1945, p. 45.

4. Ibid., p. 61.

3. The ambiguity is deepened by... but at first appears to be an

Is there a naive
consequence attitude?

good

periphrasis: "It was a small rise of ground, with a certain regularity of shape, that had perhaps been bestowed by art.."5

This ambiguity is deepened by what at first appears to be an inconsistency. Hawthorne describes the ancestral mansion already noted as the place "Wherein the lovers would dwell together" but then, a few paragraphs later, writes that "In a little time longer, while summer was still in its prime, the fairy structure of the Temple arose on the summit of the knoll.."6 This appears to be a deliberate mystification that reflects on the innocence of the lovers as well as on the uncertainty of the reader. Hawthorne is slowly anticipating his finale: that the mansion is the grave where Lilius is buried, to be followed in time by Adam, and that the "fairy structure" is the symbol of the expectation that happiness can be found untouched by the shadows of sorrow and death. The interplay of these effects does not stop here however.

As the fairy structure of the Temple rises, we learn that "there was a fantasy among the people of the neighborhood that the edifice was planned after an ancient mausoleum and was intended for a tomb, and that the central slab of dark-veined marble was to be inscribed with the names of buried ones."7 We now find before us now three buildings which are in reality one - the ancestral mansion, the fairy temple, and the ancient mausoleum that the temple becomes. Here we do find an inconsistency, since the place Hawthorne promised to bury his lovers is forgotten and we find Lilius buried in the mausoleum.

5. Ibid., p. 63.

6. Ibid., p. 65.

7. Ibid., p. 68.

Through the linking of the houses, those of antique temple, ancestral mansion, ancient mausoleum, and ancient sepulchre Adam Forrester discovers the true relationship between happiness and death. "With the strange smile in which his insanity was wont to gleam forth," Walter Gascoigne bluntly confronts Adam with the lesson of his experience: "... you have found no better foundation for your happiness than on a grave!" (L.Q., p.76.) But Adam is preserved from the sting of his "taunting words" by the sudden understanding of "what was betokened by the parable in which Lily and himself had acted; and the mystery of Life and Death was opened to him." (L.Q., p.83.) The climax of the tale comes with Adam's experiences of total joy; "'Joy! Joy! he cried, throwing his arms towards heaven, 'on a grave be the site of our temple; and now our happiness is for Eternity!'" (L.Q., p.84.) The build-up of this experience and the explanation of it are to be found in the shifting meanings of the words hope and joy.

Images of joy, childlike and carefree, dominate the first two-thirds of the tale; and these images are contrasted by the haunting, shadowing gloom of Walter Gascoigne as he follows the lovers around. At the beginning, the lovers plan to make their temple sacred, "to all manner of refined and innocent enjoyment"; music will intermingle with "the strains of pathos which make joy more sweet." (L.Q., p.68.) The rocky dell that is the second of the proposed sites for the Temple of Happiness includes a "streamlet with ripple and foam, and a continual voice of inarticulate joy." (L.Q., p. 66.) Thus nature lends itself to the deceptive hopes of the lovers. Finally, Hawthorne brings back the phrase from the early part of the tale that describes the lovers "like Hope and Joy roaming hand in hand through life"; but

the meaning of the phrase drastically changes, becoming in its second usage "a vision of Hope and Joy" succeeding to "the shadow of Affliction." (L.Q., p.75) Hope and Joy become the true and appropriate emotions that Adam experiences at the climax of the tale; the joy that was based on naive expectations becomes the joy of Adam's triumph as he accepts the inevitable duality of happiness and death.

Highly Romantic Images

This process of altering the significance of an image, emotion, or concept extends to the images of light that are associated with joyfulness. The lovers "seemed to glance like winged creatures through the strips of sunshine, and to scatter brightness where the deep shadows fell." (L.Q., p.) They are "moulded of earth's sunshine", whereas Walter Gascoigne is "of earth's gloomiest shade." (L. Q., p.) This interplay of light and shade parallels the changing meanings of hope and joy: at the beginning sunshine betokens foolish and innocent expectations; at the end it symbolizes Adam's strong spiritual insight. So the "ray of sunshine" that glimmered down into the sepulchre drives out the darkness associated with Walter Gascoigne, "the embodied symbol of some great woe."

It becomes evident as the tale progresses that Adam and Lily are symbolizing Man (Adam) and Death (Lily). Lilius is the pale, fragile girl whose name identifies a flower associated with death, and in this light she can still be understood as Adam's partner. A projection of the lily image is then revealed by Hawthorne later in the tale. As Lilius and Adam stand at the place where they will build their temple, un-

aware that the ground has been shaped into the pattern of a tomb, they smile and glance down "to see that a pale lily was growing at their feet." (L.Q., p.) This transference of the girl's name to an actual flower rooted in an earth which has "treasured up the bones of generations that had died long ago," is an important symbolic meaning - Liliias smiles, unknowing upon what she herself is. This interchanging of names hints at the change she soon will undergo.

During construction of the Temple-mausoleum, Liliias dies, and in the act of dying becomes a positive spiritual force. Walter Gascoigne "stalked drearily away," for "his gloom, symbolic of all earthly sorrow," has no power that can equal that of Liliias'. The stages by which Liliias is immaterialized give a clue to the meaning of the force which brings Adam to his sudden insight. She grows more fragile each day, until she finally becomes invisible.

Adam Forrester throws his arms towards heaven, in the direction of the departed Liliias. The idea of turning the tragedy of death into a victory seems to be inferred by this action. Adam has been released from the arms of sorrow and gloom, he now feels a union with spirit through his pursuit of death.

The mood of The Lily's Quest is can appear at first as that of a fairy tale, "Two lovers, once upon a time, had planned a little summer-house...". However this seemingly fairy tale like story is used to hide the deeper meanings, to keep complete solemnity from taking over. Hawthorne means us to understand that death is a liberating experience which may be taken two ways:

when Adam ends, "and now our happiness is for Eternity!" which seems to relate that Adam is looking forward to a reunion with Liliias in heaven and he is rejoicing because she is in heaven. But in fact The Lily's Quest does not document the worthlessness of the present life in order to glorify the next.⁸ The emphasis is upon the unity and interdependence of life and death, of the temple and the tomb. Hawthorne seems to be telling us that in life we can discover the sources of joy in the knowledge and acceptance of the conditions that do limit humans in their quests.

8. Reverend L.J. Fick, A Study of Hawthorne's Theology, The Light Beyond, (Westminster, Md.: 1955), p.22-24.

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WOMEN



**and
Theology**



73

Grailville

Loveland, Ohio 45140

This report has "written itself". . .

The group of women who created "Women Exploring Theology" set a deadline by which to have sent in reports, reflections and other material and notw, because people have been waiting to receive it, the reports and reflections thus far received have been printed and are being mailed to you.

Many of the experiences could not be expressed in words, so that you will not find a report from every group or a minute by minute account of the week we spent together. A process discovered/created by one group is reported on and some steps suggested for your own theologizing with others in "One word at a time." The "drama in three parts" written by the Biblical myths and images group is here. . . as well as some of the songs we sang. "Sisterhood" report is enclosed. The "Sex-Box" prepared by the Sexuality group and their report is impossible to present on paper, and alas, we neglected to take a photo! The most important discovery of the "Sin II" group was the recognition that the virtues and strengths ascribed to women - compassion, service/support of people, community as basic - are accepted and even demanded in the private sphere (the home, the family, etc.) but are not allowed to affect or determine societal patterns in a radical way. . .

But the hope was and is that women, becoming more conscious and confident of their own being, might become more willing and able to influence the study and living out and development of theology itself, so that fulness of life might be more possible for all women and for all men.

Audrey Sorrento

Photos were taken by Pat Murray, Cathy Nickerson and Peg Siegmund.
Cover design by Mindy Farasey

Grailville
Loveland, Ohio 45140

September, 1973

The first day of this week's conference is almost over. The time so far, since our arrival for Saturday's supper, has not felt much different than home--a lot of time spent in attentive listening to myself and others. The BIG PROBLEM, and it remained a problem even though I tried to be relaxed about it, was to choose which Work Group I wanted to stay with this week. The options were (in the beginning): (1) Spirit and Mysticism; (2) Exploring Christian Concepts of sin, guilt, grace, love, salvation, as they were taught us by the Church; (3) Sexuality and Politics (the Politics portion disbanded with first session); (4) Sisterhood (which seems should be part of Sexuality); (5) Biblical Myths, and (6) a "newness", "nothingness" group to "catch people" (which seemed an honest, radical statement of where women have to begin--that is, at the beginning).

I have been feeling strongly programmed and resenting it; this seems unwarranted as we are setting our agenda so it won't be imposed upon us. Yet, things seem intense, urgent, and not relaxed, despite the facade of ease. Hopefully, it's the newness, the freedom to choose, and normal artificiality of such a gathering....

I felt the most important thing to do here was to continue the process of consciousness-raising of how the Church has affected my life. It seems important because I've simply ignored all my years in the Church, during my recent years in the "secular" women's movement. I have, in fact, not thought about the Church at all! And that is a form of self-negation. When people use old Church language--God, sin, guilt, salvation, change-- I think I have no reaction. Somehow I'm suspicious. And now I want to pull out that experience and see it for what it's worth. . . .

I want only to expose the Church's self interest and the State's interest in keeping it functioning. And I feel alone in that wish here. I feel a need to get my political long range vision together, so I can speak more to people's urgency and/or sense of "what can I do when all seems to have failed?" I fear at those moments of despair the Church most often is a pacifier of action. People then feel guilty for all their wrong-doings. And what gets rid of guilt is action, collective action, with built-in criticism and self-criticism. And that doesn't feel like anything I've experienced in the Church. I've read about it in China's revolution; I've experienced it in my women's group, and that feels like what I used to call religious, used to name religious, used to seek in the religious institution of the Church.

So now what I experience as "religious" is not at all connected with the Church or any self-identifying religious persons of any faith.

But I like people here, the place, the food. And look forward to the week, hoping we're able to tear off the layers of acculturation, and risk questioning even God and the Church, to see what is left to share and celebrate and hope for with each other in building a better world. That takes a lot of guts; we'll see. Women has SO MANY VALID needs and fears; just to be here with women may be the most important first step for many.

I do fear, somewhere deep, intuitively, non-rationally--that most people here have little concern or awareness of how the Church links up with State in preserving the status quo; which, with our being the Church in the U. S., only reinforces poverty and inhumanity around the world. To get at that we must begin with ourselves, as Church women, to see how the Church has devastated and impoverished us. To tear away those layers of "self-hood:" and begin new selves is a large, gutsy order. We'll see if people here can be so risky and trusting together.....

We were a diverse group of 43 women, ranging in age from 18 to 60 years, and we came from all over the country - some ministers, some RC sisters, some housewife-mothers, some seminary or college religion students, some directly involved in church or movement activities for women, and some educators. We gathered, not in anger, but in hope, believing that as women exploring theology, what we had to talk about had repercussions beyond our own lives, into the various traditions from which we had sprung, and even into the structures of our society. We gathered in the spirit of sisterhood, excited about the experience of working through our concerns together, and of deepening our insights through dialogue. We were empowered by our meeting so many women of dignity and concern, of compassion and competency.

I remember us huddled around newprint, talking seriously about different women in the Bible, about sin, about sisterhood, about sexuality. I see us folk dancing in the grass, eating bread and cheese in our dining room while singing songs of "Shalom." There we are stretching our bodies to the fullest in yoga, picnicking with our house groups, sitting on the grass talking about work with Saul Alinsky-type organizing, and then another about her work with Paulo Freire in the National Council of Churches. Many of us spent time at Yoga, swimming, the art studio and folk dancing in the afternoons, to experience our bodies as more integrally a part of ourselves and explore our creative potentiality. There were worship celebrations and the Shalom meal, special times, time to celebrate our being together in all the varied meanings of "Shalom." There were, then, many essential elements of our week together: work groups, based on cooperative dialogue, formed by women with similar concerns, meeting each morning; house groups, helpful at the week's beginning as a way for us to be with others and to clarify our concerns for the week. They became a means to share our experiences in the different work groups, as well as to get a sense of what was happening for, by and about women in the various denominations; evenings in the bistro, providing a somewhat different atmosphere for much the same kinds of discussions as the house groups. Feed in sessions at the end of week, when each work group, in many exciting ways, shared its content and process with the rest of us.

The daily work groups theologized "out of experience." These were the most stable and task oriented groups.

They addressed themselves to the following concerns:

to re-examine the traditional Christian value system in the light of women's experience, especially in the institutions of the church and of society; to examine already existing concepts in that light (humility, pride, sinfulness, etc.)

The expectations of the behavior of women in the light of church teaching and the discovery that the "private" realm, the family, where values such as compassion, service/support of people, "community" as basic to life were valued - had little effect upon the "public" realm in which males predominate.

what does it/can it mean to be sexual? how to get beyond our conditioning to feel bad and somehow ashamed of our bodies into a fuller understanding of our sexuality?

realizing that the word "brotherhood" has many Christian connotations and that sisterhood does not, can we experience some elements of "sisterhood" and ask how those experiences relate to the concept/reality of "supportive Christian community."

to explore various myths and images of women, of God/god/goddess, ancient, modern, biblical and secular.

As the meeting developed I found myself in accord with those who were able to make such statements as:

"Good doesn't force, manipulate, or demand. Good (God) woos us. If we choose the good, it puts demands on us.

The work of theologizing is to make reality of human community - to save the earth from holocaust.

Our theologizing as women can't be a private happening. We have to get our thinking into the mainstream; make it public, politicize ourselves."

"The most meaningful part of the sisterhood groups for me was the realization that we were able to be supportive and work through conflict. It was because of this that I was revealed to myself, and not because we were trying to convert each other to our own positions. The revelatory process was a healing one."

"As we reported back from our work groups, it seemed to me that we were beginning to find our own way of theologizing - a way that departs from the linear, seeks for wholeness, and insists on relating abstractions to specific experiences. The reports were lively, combining the personal and the universal, using non-verbal as well as verbal means (images and symbols, drawing, dance, drama, music). Clearly they were the fruit of a deep sharing in a collective process which managed to respect the uniqueness of individual contributions while crystallizing common insights."

Because of this diversity, a diversity not peculiar to my work group but characteristic of the workshop as a whole I carry with me a lasting treasure. It is the knowledge that there are women of integrity struggling with their faith and its relationship to the Women's Liberation Movement, and the knowledge that there are women walking ways we have not walked before. I take with me from this week more questions than ever, not the kinds of questions which confuse me, but the kinds of questions that help to broaden my own search and to deepen my faith.

June 1973

WORK GROUP ON MYTHS AND IMAGES

Sheila Collins

Our inquiry into the images and myths associated with women in our religious traditions grew out of our collective desire to re-examine history with new eyes. I suppose most of us felt that in order to fully understand our present condition as women and to theologize about future possibilities, we had to come to terms with our history--to understand what our place has been in it, and perhaps even to rewrite it.

In examining our religious history, we run smack up against myths and images, for we realize that the myth of Eve as Adam's rib and the images of woman as temptress, virgin or mother have had more to do with keeping us subordinate than almost any other factor operating in the course of Western history. Myths and images are the psychic and emotional foundations upon which doctrines, institutions and social patterns which keep women inferior are built. If we are ever going to change ourselves, as well as the perceptions of men about us, then we will have to come to terms with these myths and images--not only to expose them, but to understand when, why and how they came into being and how they continue to function in light of modern realities.

In order to understand why certain myths and images concerning male and female arose as they did in Judeo-Christianity, we have to understand what was happening in the religio-cultural life of the ancient Near East against which Judaism (and later Christianity) saw themselves pitted. Our group, therefore, did not limit itself to an examination only of those myths and images which appear in the Bible, but to the entire range of images with which women have been in any way associated, including those ancient mother goddesses which for a long time were the only images of deity in the world.

During the week, the following questions were either articulated or implied in the way in which we went about our investigation.

- What are all of the images we can think of with which women have been associated?
- Where in the Bible do certain images or themes cluster? Why?
- Why are there so few positive images for women?
- What is the origin of the major biblical images of woman as temptress, virgin and mother? Why have these three been emphasized to the exclusion of such images of woman as God, prophet, teacher, minister, redeemer, judge, wisdom, Law?
- Is there a difference in the kinds of images for women between the Old and New Testaments?
- Are there any positive feminine images in the Bible which have been ignored or distorted in the tradition?

- Is there a difference between the way in which the images of "virgin" "mother" and "harlot" functioned in the mother-goddess religions from the way in which they function in Judeo-Christianity?
- What were the social and historical conditions which gave rise to certain kinds of feminine images and themes in the Bible?
- Can we learn anything new about certain biblical women if we look at them through feminist eyes? Do some of our perceptions of them perhaps need to be changed?
- How do we interpret our changed perceptions of myths and images to other women in the church?
- What do we do with Adam and Eve? Throw it out? Reinterpret Eve as the stronger, more positive figure because she was reaching for knowledge? Re-exegete the passage to show that creation of the adham was an androgynous event? Remythologize the creation using insights from the mother-goddess religions?
- How do we react to Jesus? Does knowing that he was a feminist make any difference? Can he really be seen as an androgynous figure? Why ~~did~~ he take male form? Does that really make a difference to us? How do we relate to the themes of crucifixion and resurrection?

THE FOLLOWING DRAMA IS OUR ANSWER TO SOME OF THESE
QUESTIONS.

MYTHS AND IMAGES OF WOMAN: ANCIENT AND MODERN

A Drama in Three Parts

Part I

CAST: Chorus I, which represents the masculine principle at work in history, is robed in dark blues and greys. Chorus II, representing the feminine principle, wears brightly colored yellow and lavender robes. A narrator is needed to read the interpretive quotations which are interspersed throughout the drama. She can either be a part of the female chorus or a separate person. A figure representing the human soul moves about between the two choruses, alternately attracted and repulsed by the masculine chorus and finally drawn more and more to the feminine chorus. Later on in the drama, the feminine chorus becomes Jezebel and her prophets.

(As the drama opens, the two choruses are arrayed against each other at opposite sides of the stage. The masculine chorus brandishes dead tree limbs as weapons. The chorus is menacing and fierce. Its lines are spoken in crescendoes of sharpness and violence. The feminine chorus holds green, leaf-bearing branches, somewhat as wands. Its lines are spoken in a kind of quiet, proud strength, in counterpoint to those of the masculine chorus which become increasingly hysterical with rage.)

NARRATOR: Usually, where a goddess is the principal figure, the mystery of birth, of life generating from life is emphasized, whereas when a god is the hero, life issuing from death is the crux.¹

CHORUS I: Thus says the Lord: "I am the first and I am the last; beside me there is no god. Who is like me? Let him proclaim it!"²

CHORUS II: I am woman
beginning
first life, first legend
first mystery
I am the ancient red-haired
mariner exploring a world
of my creation (justice, peace, wisdom)³

NARRATOR: In reading the Old Testament, there are certain of the Lord's statements to the Israelites asserting His power and uniqueness in which one seems to hear undertones of boastfulness, as if to drown out voices of doubt about all this power, so new. If it were not sacrilegious one would be tempted to say: "Methinks the Lord doth protest too much."⁴

CHORUS I: Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; who brings princes to nought, and makes the rulers of earth as nothing.⁵

CHORUS II: I am ark, womb
cradle of life
I am milk and honey

NARRATOR: Elohim, the most commonly used Hebrew word for God in the Old Testament, is a plural form made up of Eloh, feminine singular and im a masculine plural. It may refer to a male or female god or gods.^{5a}

CHORUS I: Behold, I will make of you a threshing sledge, new, sharp, and having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff; you shall winnow them and the wind shall carry them away, and the tempest shall scatter them. And you shall rejoice in the Lord; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.⁶

CHORUS II: I am Tubel-Cain (daughter of Tibir)
daughter of Tiamat)
sower of grain, tamer of animals
builder of towns
fire-maker

CHORUS I: Who stirred up one from the east whom victory meets at every step? He gives up nations before him, so that he tramples Kings under foot; he makes them like dust with his sword, like driven stubble with his bow. He pursues them and passes on safely, by paths his feet have not trod. Who has performed and done this, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, the first and the last; I am He.⁷

The Lord goes forth like a mighty man, like a man of war he stirs up his fury; he cries out, he shouts aloud, he shows himself mighty against his foes.⁸

CHORUS II: I neither war nor hunt
kill or sacrifice
(intelligence, devotion, liberty)

NARRATOR: Usually, where a goddess is the principal figure, the mystery of birth, of life generating from life is emphasized, whereas when a god is the hero, life issuing from death is the crux.

CHORUS II: (The following names are said individually by each member of the chorus in turn).

I am Mary-Isis called also
Athene, Venus, Diana
I am Proserpine, Ceres, Juno
Minerva, Hera, Rhamnusia
I am the Queen of Heaven
I am Jezebel, loyal to my
Goddess, despiser of Yahweh

(The following scene is acted out as it is being described by the narrator, while the human soul looks on in increasing horror. As Jezebel is announced, she walks proudly out into the middle of the circle, and begins to dance ecstatically to her goddess. She is followed by Chorus II who do the same. Chorus I enacts the killing of the prophets as well as Joran and Jezebel. When Jezebel and her prophets have

been symbolically killed and are lying in a heap on the floor, the human soul takes large sheets of newsprint, on which the words: mercy, nobility, concord, gentleness, generosity, dignity, are written and places them slowly and compassionately over the bodies of the "dead" victims.)

NARRATOR: Jezebel, a prophetess, wife of Ahab, King of Israel, worshipped Astarte, the Canaanite mother-goddess, referred to in the Bible as Asherah. She supported many prophets of her belief, but refused to support the prophets of Yahweh. Elijah, a prophet of Yahweh was angered by this and killed off all the prophets Jezebel supported. Then he incited Jehu to kill Jezebel's son, Joram. And Jehu called his cohorts to back him up. Two or three eunuchs came up behind Jezebel, and when Jehu said: "Throw her down!" they threw her down and her blood splattered the wall. Then Jehu went and ate and drank and said: "This is the word of the Lord which he spoke by his servant Elijah: 'The dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel, and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as dung in the face of the field, so that no one can say, This is Jezebel'". 9

NARRATOR: From the Woman's Bible, edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1895:

"All we know about Jezebel is told by a rival religionist . . . even the Jewish historian, evidently biased against Jezebel by his theological prejudices as he is, does not give any facts whatever which warrant the assertion that Jezebel was any more satanic than the ancient Israelitish gentleman, to whom her theological views were opposed . . . to Jezebel these views were a truth for which she battled as bravely as Elijah did for what he imagined to be eternal verity. Jezebel was a brave, fearless, generous woman. . . It seems to me that it would puzzle a disinterested person to decide which of those savage deeds was more 'satanic' than the other. . . I submit, that if Jezebel is a disgrace to womankind, our dear brethren at any rate have not much cause to be proud of Elijah so, possibly, we might strike a truce over the character of these two long-buried worthies." 10

(The choruses return to their places on opposite sides of the stage.)

CHORUS I: Who has directed the spirit of the Lord, or as his counselor has instructed him?
Whom did he consult for his enlightenment, and who taught him the path of justice,
and taught him knowledge and showed him the way of understanding? 11

CHORUS II: I am intuition (merely?)
knowledge of the universe
possessed for milleniums
(spirit, soul, freedom)

CHORUS I: . . . and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it . . ." 12

Terror, and the pit, and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth! He who flees at the sound of the terror shall fall into the pit; and he who climbs out of the pit shall be caught in the snare. For the windows of heaven are opened,

and the foundations of the earth tremble. The earth is utterly broken, the earth is rent asunder, the earth is violently shaken, The earth staggers like a drunken man, it sways like a hut; its transgression lies heavy upon it, and it falls and will not rise again. 13

NARRATOR: Once upon a time there lived a queen, whose devotees included all the peoples of the earth, from Anatolia, north to Celtic Britain and west, to the land of the Aztecs. They were an agriculture people, and in their devotion to their Queen maintained a life of rich harmonies. Planting and harvesting, consumption and storage, tool-making and tool-using were acts of devotion with resonances in the mysterious and wonderful process of the universe. The union of male and female was the plowing and planting of the seed. The fruit of that union--the newborn child--was celebrated as the spring grain; and the death of loved ones was the barrenness of winter itself. At that time no work was divorced from meaning, no play divorced from work, no production for the mere sake of consumption, no art "for art's sake." Poetry was not a mirror of life, for life was poetry; and ecstasy was found in the most usual of places. 14

(As Chorus II says the following lines, they begin to move slowly toward Chorus I, arms outstretched in a beckoning position, holding the green branches. As they meet Chorus I, they draw them toward the center where a large urn has been placed. Into the urn are placed the dead branches and the green ones together, so that a whole tree has been "made." Slowly, the two choruses form a circle as the last stanza of the poem is recited and they dance, rhythmically, arms entwined, around the tree.)

CHORUS II: I am wholeness
oneness with earth
and I must worship wholeness

Join me
Reclaim that within
you, earth-mystery
that is me

The One Who Frees
is not found
in separateness
in incompleteness

CHORUS I
& II: I am cycle, I am season
I am creation, I am life
I AM WOMAN !!!

End of Part I



During
"the
drama..."



REFERENCES TO PART I

1. E.O. James, Comparative Religion, Barnes and Noble, N.Y. Sec.Ed. Rev., 1961, p. 128.
2. Isaiah 44:6 - 7
3. All of the words spoken by Chorus II are from a poem by Susan Ross Clewell of St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri, printed in Shared Reflections, poetry by St. Paul students.
4. Bruno Bettelheim, Symbolic Wounds.
5. Isaiah 40: 21 - 23
- 5a* 6. Isaiah 41: 15 - 16
7. Isaiah 41: 2 - 4
8. Isaiah 42: 13
9. Compiled from the stories in I and II Kings.
10. The Woman's Bible, Part II, Arno Press, N.Y. Times Co., 1972, pp. 74-5.
11. Isaiah 40: 13 - 14
12. Genesis 1: 28
13. Isaiah 24: 17-21
14. From a fable, "A Tale of Two Deities," by Sheila Collins.
- *5a Anne McGrew Bennett, "Women in the New Society" in Journal of Current Social Issues, Winter 72-73, p. 27. cf. A. Richardson, ed. A Theological Word Book of the Bible, N.Y. 1951, pp. 94, 97.

PART II

CAST AND SETTING: A narrator, two people to represent the adham (the undifferentiated male and female) and any number of others to represent womankind. As the scene opens, the adham is lying on the floor, side by side. The tree from the last part of the drama stands at the head of the two people representing the adham. The adham is encircled by the other members of the cast, who sit watching.

ACTION: The drama which takes place in this section is largely carried out through the medium of dance. The adham is lying on the floor on its back, relaxed. Slowly, one part of it (the woman) begins to move, to come alive. She feels herself breathing; she begins to explore her body, as if it were a marvelous new discovery. Every part of it is explored as she slowly arises. She senses her weight against the floor, the pull of her center of gravity. Then she notices that her belly is swollen. As this happens, the second half of the adham arises and begins to explore his own body. The two then discover each other and begin to dance, using motions as if they are mirror images of each other. At some point their looks focus on the tree. They are seeing it for the first time. Separately, they go to it and touch it, then draw back. Their motions become no longer complimentary but confused, uncoordinated. They begin to sense they are in a box. They circle the stage as if making out the imaginary boundaries of the box. The box becomes smaller and smaller until they both end up in a fetal position. As the narrator speaks the following words, each member of the group representing womankind repeats one of the words and collapses into a fetal position.

NARRATOR: Submissive! Dependent! Fickle! Emotional! Seductive! Weak! Passive! Scatterbrained! etc. (Any number of adjectives can be used here) For hundreds of years we women have played out these roles assigned to us.

ACTION: One, by one, members of the group begin verbally to express their dissatisfaction with this place (the words should come spontaneously). Slowly, they get up, one by one, helping and urging others to do the same. Those who make it to a standing position suddenly feel and express a sense (cautious at first, but then more and more intense) freedom, liberation, spontaneity. As she gets up, one member of the group begins to sing the song written by Dorey Ellzey about being "out of the garden." One member of the group, in spite of repeated urgings, remains half-way up, while another remains in the fetal position. The song finally ends on a half-note. The story is still unfinished.

SETTING: Grailville. Women are sitting in a circle discussing what took place and how they felt about it. Feelings of being "high" are expressed. Then, someone announces a visitor. It is a minister from Cincinnati who has come to give the group a message.

ACTION: Enter a woman dressed in a black clerical robe, stern demeanor. She speaks:

My friends, I can think of no better way to give you my message than to read from article, published last night in the Cincinnati Post. (Cf. Cin. Post, June 18, 1973, p.5)

For a long time, as a Bible-believing Christian and as a minister, I have been saying that the women's liberation movement was anti-God, anti-Christ, anti-Church, anti-Bible, and anti-home. In a position paper, written by a member of the movement and published in the Post, the Bible concept of God is denied and ridiculed. It portrays the teachings of the Bible as being denigrating to women. The contents of the Bible are spoken of as the imaginations of men. An open declaration of war is made on Bible religion by urging withdrawal of financial support. This article should be a real eye-opener, to women who have been deceived into thinking they could believe the Bible and the leaders of the women's liberation movement at the same time.

The teaching of the Bible concerning women is direct and easily understood. It is not a matter of whether it is understood but whether it is believed and accepted.

"The head of the woman is the man" I Cor. 11,3. That's what the Bible says. This teaching is consistent throughout the entire Bible.

The Bible teaching concerning woman and the church is also plain and simple: "Let your women keep silence in the churches. . . I suffer not a woman to teach, not to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. . . I Tim. 2, 11-12.

Concerning women and the home: "thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee." Gen. 3, 16. . "That they may teach the young woman to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their husbands. . . Titus 2, 4.

It has not been publicly stated (in this position paper) that the women's movement rejects the Bible concept of God, Christ, the Church, and the home. It is now known that a Bible believer could not be a part of this movement. It is time for the great majority of women to let it be known that these latter day prophets of the women's liberation movement do not speak for them.

The women express their amazement and disgust, but hear the speech out. After the preacher leaves, they begin to question whether this attitude is not a part of the reality they will have to face when they return home. They then begin to raise questions which were never fully explored in the work group: Is women's liberation really anti-Christ? How do we deal with Christ? Is it satisfying to say that he is a feminist? Why have we avoided all week dealing with him? etc. The refrain from Dorie Ellzey's song: "I'm in the water and the bathtub is gone" is begun again.

And that is it. We are out of the Garden and in the water. Where do we go from here?

OUT OF THE GARDEN

words and music by: Dorie Ellzey

Somebody help me, I am out of the Garden.
I am on my own and I feel, oh, so lost.
I couldn't help it, I was driven along
by something tellin' me to move
at almost any cost.
I can't go back, I can only stumble along.
I'm in the water and the bathtub is gone.

Well, somebody call me if you know
the darkness and you dream in color
and you know the way.
Roles, rules and reasons I have said good-bye now,
Well, it's time to die not
but I'm here to stay.

Nobody knows me in this new body of mine.
I plan to know it better
than what I left behind.
Jesus said, behold the old has passed away now
and the new is comin',
but Lord it takes so long.

I guess the only thing we have to do now
is to spread the news now
so I sing this song.
We are the children without a lullaby.
Jesus said to live, you have to be free to die
well,

Somebody help me, I am out of the Garden.
I am on my own and I feel, oh, so lost.
I couldn't help it, I was driven along
by something tellin' me to move
at almost any cost.
I can't go back, I can only stumble along.
I'm in the water and the bathtub is gone.

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ONE WORD AT A TIME

A Form for Theologizing from Personal Experience

HOW IT HAPPENED

The following process of theological exploration, a process which can be used by any group, whether they consider themselves "theologians" or just plain people, came about quite by accident. At a conference of women and theology at Grailville in the summer of 1973, a group of six women decided they wanted to think together out of their own personal experience on a group of traditional theological terms that were of particular interest to them at this point in history. The group of terms, which relate loosely to each other, included: sin, guilt, grace, forgiveness, good and evil.

Because of the nature of the conference, it being one where the participants were their own resource, there was no plan or style of work defined for any of the groups that drew together around some subject. So, when this group came together, we had to decide how we would proceed. We found ourselves sitting in a circle, mostly in rocking chairs, around a low table. On the table we had laid a pad of newsprint and some markers. We began to talk tentatively about how we might proceed. Finally, it was suggested that we take one of the words and just begin to talk out of our own experience in relation to it. We decided to begin with guilt. As we began to talk, a process began to evolve. We were not aware of this at the time, but realized it later.

After we decided to take a particular word, we sat for a few minutes, waiting to see what would happen and how we might take hold of that word. Finally someone began to say what that word meant in her experience and in her thinking. The group sat quietly and listened very carefully and openly to what was being shared with them. The person was given adequate time to complete what she had to say. When she had finished, another person picked up and began to share her own experience and insights on the word. And so, we began to say to each other what we thought and what we felt in relation to the particular word. What was being offered was openly and attentively received. Sometimes a person would respond by saying, "That makes me think of an idea, or that develops my idea further." Then we would build on what had been said. Or she simply would begin to talk about her experience often from a place beginning where another person had left off. There was never any attempt to come to some consensus or to some agreement as to what was right or wrong in our thinking. There was no effort to create new theories that we all agreed on. And there was no challenging or questioning of judging of another person's offering. There was simply open sharing and careful listening. This made it possible for each one to have the helpful opportunity to think through and explore her own experience and ideas and by articulating them to find them more useful. Or by listening to others to learn out of their live experience and to look at her own experience in another way because of sharing someone else's understanding.

As we proceeded to talk, someone reached over and picked up a marker and wrote, from whatever angle she was sitting in relation to the newsprint, a brief sentence or notation about something she thought was important to remember. Eventually, someone else did the same thing.

Gradually, we began to realize we were making common notes but we were not having to stop and look at what was being written, or discuss it, or decide together what to write. So in the end we had each day a composite set of notes we had all made and we realized that we had put down some of the more pertinent and fresh ideas that were being shared. We found this very helpful to look back at the to remind ourselves of some of the crucial things in our discussions.

We decided each day on a word out of the group of words that we would focus on for that particular day. Naturally, what had gone on around another word the day before sometimes informed what we were saying about the new word. Sometimes there was obvious interrelating of what had already been said, and sometimes we simply flowed on around the new word.

Toward the end of the week we began to talk about how we could share with the rest of the work groups what our group had been doing. It was then we began to realize that we had been unconsciously developing a process which was important for us to share rather than content that we should share. We did, of course, share some of our content by sharing our common notes, but we also then set about trying to put down our understanding of the process we had been following. It is that process which follows and which we all recommend highly to any adventurous souls that are concerned about theologizing out of their own experience with their own life, with other persons, and with God.

THE PROCESS

1. To begin, choose a group of words related to theological traditions such as sin, salvation, guilt, grace, forgiveness, pride, humility OR hope, love, joy, justice, faith, Christology, creation, etc. . . . The purpose is theologizing--not necessarily to come to common formulation, but to enter into a continuing process so as not to absolutize our own or anyone else's experience, ideas, or dogma.
2. Decide together on one word at the beginning of each session to deal with in that session.
3. Begin the process of sharing and reflecting--each out of her own experience--around the chosen word. This is a self-actualizing process. Leadership is shared and the experience of each person is accepted as valid. Because there is no forcing of individual ideas as "Truth," the process is one of lending ideas without stipulations or imposition and letting others have ideas to use and create as they wish.
4. Use a process of common note--e.g., have newsprint and markers in the center so that each person can write or draw whatever strikes them as meaningful at whatever time.
5. Limit the group to a workable size like six people. Try to work in time blocks of around two hours.

The Group: Judith Davis, Kathy Nickerson, Claire Randall, Dorothy Rasenberger, Murphy Davis Sutherland, and Eleanor Walker.

Risk of indiv.
for collectivity

Self-love
dignity

Pride/Humility
(egoism?)
(don't you wish you didn't know?)

(the way of
the future)

PROCESS

Personal freedom to choose
responsibilities +
+ assuming
guilt freely.

Personal strength
in a collective system -
Personal strength
in present system -
need to be balanced
by "collective"
In some
form

Authority?

(Calvin) Total depravity =
systemic evil

guilt is the residue
of not being
forgiven

Individualism/Individuality
finding personal priorities
insertion into social situation
how to deal with rest
Can we affirm those
not taking action
in our cause!

What gives authority?
Not individual - but group -
Anarchy problem when each
person is own authority.
Authority of same concept
arising in many places -
movements - but can be
good or evil - what determines
who/what is
good

GOOD doesn't force, manipulate or demand. us. If you give yourself to good, it puts demands on you.

EVIL forces itself on us - manipulates us I am responsible. I share this responsibility.

NEW CORPORATE STYLE: "no one is responsible"

abandoning humanizing things CONS CLOSURENESS

How seriously are we taking ourselves?

strategy: Not let women set up structures for continuing exploitation of women; economic value speaks of dangers; interpreting value solely in terms of economic reward - not falling in this trap and

help each other act out of strength (head up, not down)

reality is ultimately gracious

Acceptance of the tragic dimension (evil...) as energizing.

BOTH/AND!: NEW BEING

raising process NEVER STOPS!

OR (OR ELSE!)

NO EITHER/OR:

Body	Mind
Action	Consciousness
DOING	BEING
(Gen. I)	(Gen. II)
LOGOS	

There is a "virtue" of love that can ignore or deny the good of the community.

Helping each other to face things rather than denying.

LOVE inclusive of ourselves as well as others

openness...

grace
forgiveness

LOVE?
acceptance
salvation

full participation

The Jesus thing was a consciousness-raising process for J & J.

necessity
co-creating
inner rhythm

Does linear writing box us into linear thinking

DISCIPLINE
discipline

ultimate responsibility
- outward imposition

women's liberation is a consciousness-raising process for God!

form

surrounding new forms
developing

grace-ful-ness
 full of grace!
 being intouch with yourself
 deeply and truthfully
 to be able to respond
 generously to
 (the calls of) others
 without doing violence
 to yourself —

The assent of
 myself to the
 reality of God...

SALVATION FAITH

- intellectual
- humanity
- radical trust

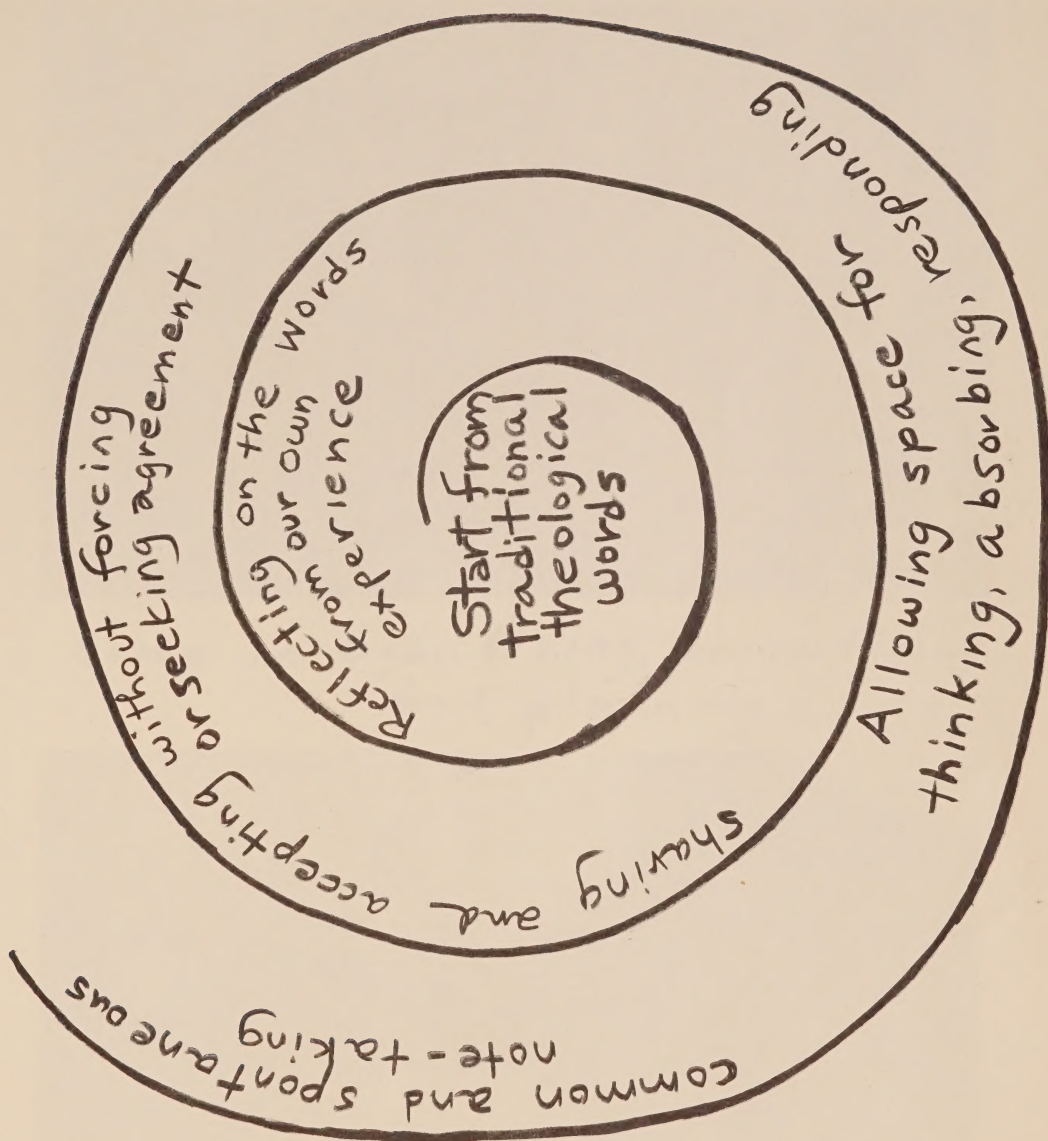
FAITH IS
 NOT AN
 ABSOLUTE

resource-ful-ness



parable of the
 dog chasing the
 butterfly.
 The clumsy, ugly
 dog is free to chase
 the graceful,
 beautiful
 butterfly.

multi-form of incarnation



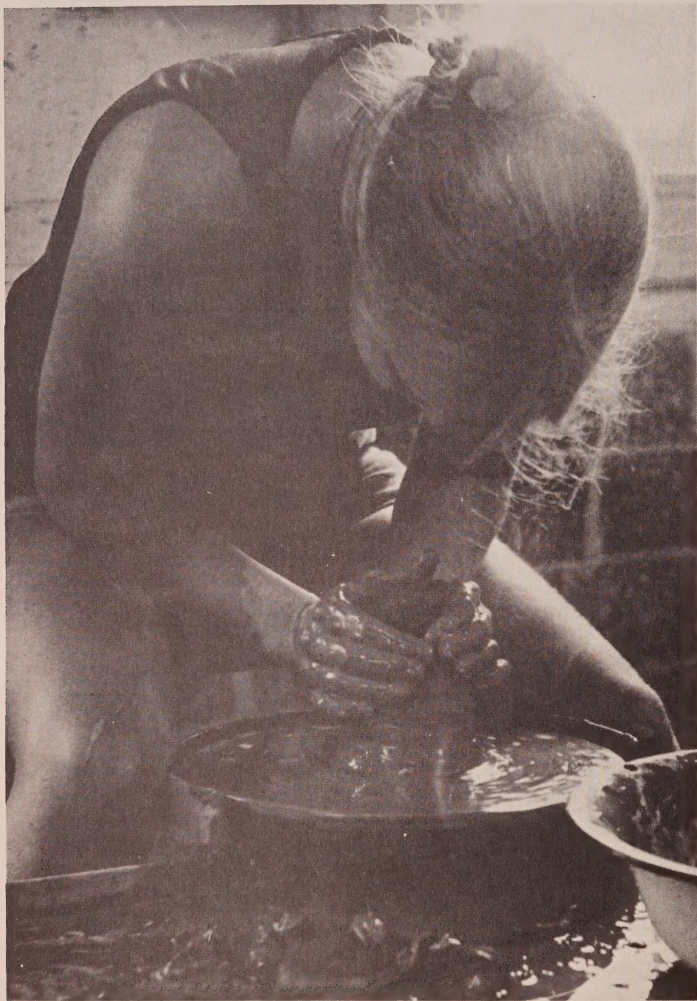
Some of the time
was spent in verbal sharing...



Some in agendaing, prioritizing
and planning...



Some in
creative activity





and in celebration !



"COMING ALIVE"

written March 22, 1973
by Martha G. Holman + Judy Barr

-3|-

"12:32 p.m. or How are you?"

(for guitar music,
Write Judy Barr, Box 26
Alexandria, So. Dakota 57311)

words and music
by Judy Barr

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The notes are handwritten, and the lyrics are written below the staves. Chord symbols (AM, DM, EM) are written above the staves at various points.

I've been ly- ing here think- ing of how things are run, a- bout
how we are fin- ished be- fore we've be- gun. While we're
turn- ing our backs to e- raise what we've done, Someone's
tak- en the chalk and on- ward they've run.

At the end of the 3rd verse there is a great ritardando (slowing down).
Then great speed with the 4th verse to resume original speed in 5th.

II. Many's the road I've run
down before
But now when I run
I seem to know more
My grandma was singing
but now that is me
And life goes as quickly
as on Father's knee.

III. I've learned more of myself
than I knew in the past
And I'm learning more now
but it isn't so fast
New ideas come slowly and
not on the run
So I'm taking my time
As I bask in the sun.

IV. But someone said faster
you can't be so slow
Or you'll wither and die
being not on the go
But from all that I've heard
and all that I've seen...
We wither and die, whether
we jog or careen.

V. So be careful with your life
that you just don't rot
As you strive to be older
or become what you're not.
As life is for living to become
What you are
And to cherish each moment
Now here - then afar!

MORAL

*This song is just a statement to me about how
I see life - my life; my fears; my life-style! (hopefully)*

BROKENNESS

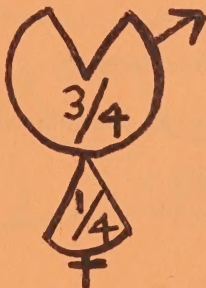
WHOLENESS

SISTERHOOD/SUPPORT GROUP

Joy Wilkes

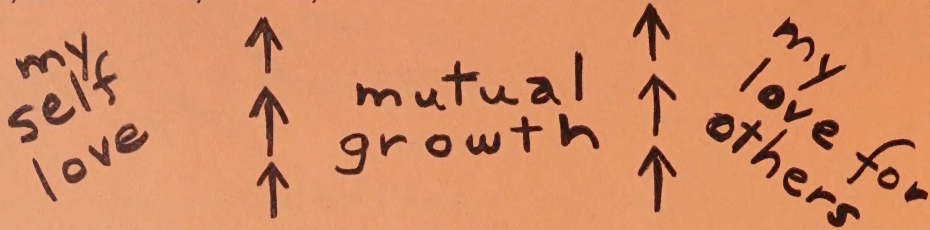
"What does sisterhood mean?" was a question that was asked many times in our group along with the questions: "Is it really possible?" "What does it have to do with theology?" There were so many questions that needed to be asked and so few answers that could be given, so our group became one of questioning and of experiencing ourselves and each other. The sisterhood/support group "experience" is difficult to express in an ordinary way, but I will try to share some of our questions, our insights and some of our new definitions. Sometimes only diagrams or drawings can convey what I experienced in the group, and for a clearer illustration I would have to dance or sing for you.

In the past some of our deepest problems with sisterhood and support have been that we have felt a fear of becoming too intimate with other women, we have been afraid to trust and afraid of being hurt. So we have played "roles" and have rarely, if ever, developed real relationships with women. This has also been true in our male-female interactions where there has been a dependent-independent relationship but rarely an interdependent one. We talked of women feeling whole only if they were half of a relationship--that of a male-female couple. But there have been many times when the relationship has been lopsided ... more like this . . .



As we experienced one another, we began to relax and to accept our own and each other's weaknesses and strengths. We could risk openness, could listen and speak with our real selves. We could then share our deep experiences and feel accountable to each other. We had made a commitment to deal with our conflicts creatively and openly and to articulate our feelings and our beliefs. We felt we could no longer make assumptions about one another . . . for "to assume makes an ass of us and me". We decided there could never be a "perfect" anything, but we would always be in the process of working at . . . and we would be in the process of becoming whole.

On our road to wholeness, we learned that loving one's self was a necessary ingredient for loving and supporting others. Because I like survival, I want you to survive too. My love for myself nourishes my love for you... and for others.

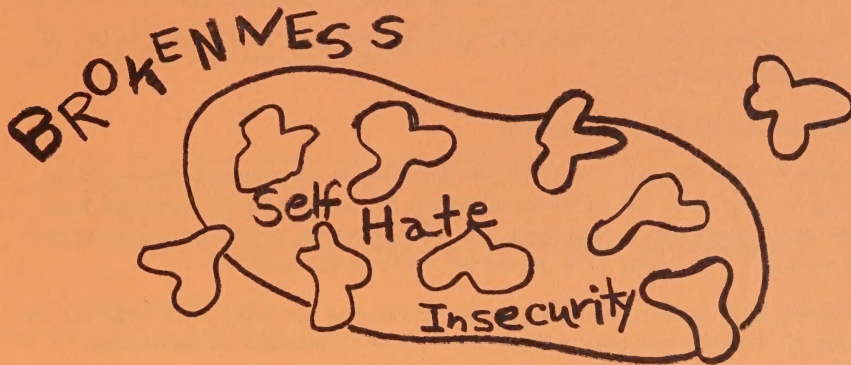


We fantasized what it would be like if "Christianity" might actually come true, that people could really know how to love, that differences could be appreciated, that exclusivity and discrimination would be ended. We felt as though there was a wind (spirit?) blowing, and it was blowing through us as women (and it's impossible to control the wind). The church both past and present has prostituted Christianity and has hindered us from being supportive to one another. Perhaps in sisterhood, one of our greatest contributions to society would be to combat one of the perpetrators of oppression and sexism---the church!

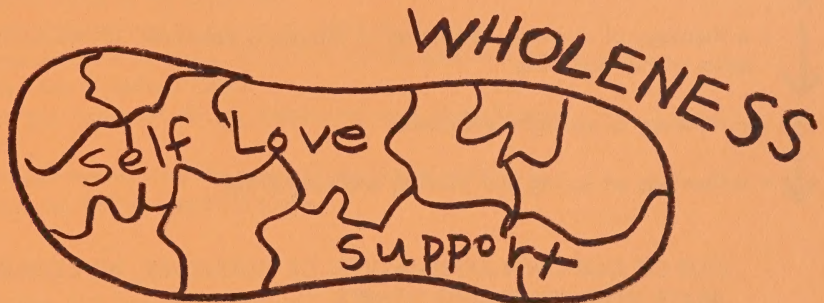
THOUGHTS FOR SHARING:

- being open to relating to different life styles
- dealing with differences responsively and creatively
- affirming my ok-ness and your ok-ness
- trusting to share your and my weaknesses...and strengths
- being willing to risk
- there are no yardsticks
- value me for my own self, you for your own self
- I have worth, you have worth
- bring together the splits within ourselves and between people like:
 - feminine/masculine
 - feelings/intellect
 - head/body
 - mental/physical
 - man/woman
 - clergy/laity
 - gay/straight
 - professional/non-professional
 - sisterhood is thought of as political/brotherhood of man is religious
- we must accept each other where we are - not where expectations are
- we deal with negatives so often in ourselves rather than positives
- the church perpetuates those negatives
- I am a woman giving birth to myself!
- birth can be a painful process
- I can meet myself
- I can walk in my real skin
- God's love is there -- we do not have to earn it

As the week progressed, our brokenness became more understandable, and we could begin to feel healed and wholeness. We discovered that many of us had been functioning with a theology of self-hate and insecurity and that we were fragmented. There often were parts of ourselves (fragments) which we could not integrate into our own reality.



When we were healed in love and support, we could deal with non-integratable parts and bring our fragments together. Our wholeness looked like this.



Our acceptance of ourselves and of each other became a religious experience for many of us. We realized then that theology is our reality as it is experienced. So we began to look at theology in terms of our experiences in a sisterhood/support group. We realized too that we had not only been exploring theology but "doing" theology all week in our living and our loving. And we began to redefine some of the traditional theological terms in our own language.

- conversion makes sense in terms of acceptance, but conversion is not some outside force trying to change or convert me

- we are reconciled or redeemed to our selves (for we were created whole!)
- resurrection is going from life to life (not death to life) as we grow, risk and change (example: caterpillar to butterfly)
- revelation is a process of knowing ourselves, giving permission to ourselves to be, to come out, to express ourselves
- grace occurs when we take the leap or risk
- sin is separation from one's self. If we know something is counterproductive and we keep repeating it, that's sin. If we allow ourselves to continue to be separated from ourselves, we deny revelation - that too is sin. For if we are ourselves and know ourselves, then we don't try to play God nor do we try to smash ourselves.
- evil is not sharing with someone but dumping onto someone our anger, our hostility, or forcing change on someone and taking away their power, therefore dehumanizing

In our sisterhood/support group in our week together we had moved through:

- ↓ - a theology of insecurity, hate, non-trust, no-goodness
- ↓ - a theology of risk, light in the tunnel, experiencing grace
- ↓ - a theology of ok-ness, beginning to integrate ourselves, to reconcile our splits within ourselves
- ↓ - a theology of strength and power
- ↓ - a theology of loving and trusting and supporting

OUT OF OUR OWN AFFIRMATION OF OURSELVES, WE COULD THEN
MOVE INTO AFFIRMING OTHERS.

ALLELUIA! AMEN!

Later...

we shared some reflections

GRAILVILLE 1973

Whenever the Work Groups at this Conference are mentioned,
the "Sin Group" and the "Sex Group" evoke laughter.
It makes me sure they are connected.

I.

Of course, the Church doesn't promote either one:
People enjoy getting uppity,
And this life's not for fun.
The next life may not be either unless you've suffered enough in this one.
That means
NO SIN and NO SEX.
Best keep things how they are, and under control.

My sex is woman.
The Church taught me to hide my self
under God or Jesus or a minister or some other man.
Of course, in a sexless, holy way!

I was for a while alive in my creation;
But Yahweh worshippers had to figure out who was boss--
Too much competition from those attractive nature gods and goddesses!
Yahweh always was a jealous God!
So my self was put under all things, beginning with those leaves.

The Church taught me my consciousness of sex began with Eve;
And since then, my being woman is sinful.

II.

"Love my neighbor as I love my sinful self"?
That's a sure path BACK to God,
NOT
TOWARD my sisters and brothers.

I am tired of waiting and falling short.
God and the Church stay in business with women's failures.
And since women always fall short of being full human--that is, male,
We're always failing,
That's guaranteed income for God and his supporters.

In 7th Grade Confirmation Class Cathy asked,
"Who made God?"
And was told,
"Christians don't question; they believe."

That's what the Watergate Conspirators said to each other
if anyone raised a question,
"I don't know and you don't want to know."
Nixon. Ehrlichman, Haldeman, Colson, Magruder

Are all still in Confirmation Class,
believing in the holy office of the presidential boss.
I won't pray for Nixon;
I won't stop asking questions.
I have decided to put that Church out of business!!

III.

I am no longer hidden and silent.
I say that my story didn't begin with Eve and Adam.
It began before that beginning.
(That beginning--when "Jesus was with God"--
came along quite late.)
I was in the beginning when all life began,
because life comes out of woman.
I began to live when women were in harmony with the earth.
The Earth is my Mother and Goddess.
I began every time I choose my self;
when I no longer wait for God or some other man to choose me.
I choose myself with my sisters and brothers.

No more the Church's choosing the good for me,
No more the Church's doing good on the poor,
No more the Church's do-goodism on or for anybody!

I will help myself to life's meal of
suffering, joy, sorrow, tears, anger, risk, fright, rest, love, screaming,
planning,
strategizing,
hurt,
death,
fight,

until all of creation stands ON ITS OWN FEET and can say to each other:
BEHOLD IT IS GOOD.

Judy Davis

I had a growthful interaction with an "environmental structure" in a pasture-like field at Grailville. After years of self-hate, I count any flowing, positive relations, even with objects, animals and moments, as celebrations of the pulsations of life within me.

I spent two hours one afternoon atop of this human-created art form, not touching earth once. It wasn't too comfortable up there for the structure is composed of (donated) utility poles cut to various heights, placed upright in rows about two feet apart. The complete structure looks like seating in a theater, with low seats in front, proceeding back to higher and higher seats; the theater stage is quiet pasture and lovely surrounding woods. You can walk about, stepping from pole to pole or you can perch on one pole until your rear gets sore. That's about all you can do. . and I did that and liked it for two hours. I also read a good book and wrote this brief story which you are now reading.

It was a major quest for me to find a good pole to sit on. I wanted to sit high enough up so that the grass, snails, bugs, rocks and other earthly things did not dominate my thoughts and low enough so that the swaying of my perch did not frighten me. My perch had to be surrounded by at least two adjacent poles which did not ooze tar, in case I needed to touch another pole or place my books on another pole. The pole on which I perched had to be broad enough to support my rear and not too roughly-sawed, for I was wearing short shorts. Thus it was that I spent quite a bit of time stepping back and forth from the northern-most poles to the southernmost poles seeking a good perch. I moved several times, too, because I found after only a short time of sitting, that the broadness and smoothness of any particular pole was illusionary. I never stepped up to the highest poles, though, for it was too frightening there.

The sun played hide-'n-seek with me and finally gave way to a thunderous-looking collection of clouds. So I left. What could I possibly do atop of a perch in the rain?

But during those two hours, I had celebrated my interaction with all of my life and with my singleness and with the precariousness of my positions. I had learned without destroying the object of my interaction; I was happy. I was a theologian in my own way; making enough sense of life to know its goodness and proceed on, renewed.

Lorely Thompson
July 29, 1973

Memories from the Sisterhood Group at the Conference on Women and Theology at Grailville,
June, 1973.

We wondered if Sisterhood was really possible because of our past experiences--
We had been crucified by our sisters.
We had had problems hearing each other.
We had little trust in our sisters and they in us.
We seemed to all be going in different directions.
We competed with each other for men, jobs, status, and power.
We found societal institutions working against our Sisterhood.
We were afraid to be honest with one another.
We couldn't express our true feelings about each other whether they were bad or good.
BUT we found Sisterhood at Grailville when--
We could take the risk of being ourselves with each other in all honesty.
It took great courage, believe me.
We could forget talking about Sisterhood and actually experience it with all its threat and all its potential.
We could accept emotions and feelings without morbid examination and pre-occupation.
We could accept and learn from one another's hells as well as from victories and accomplishments.
We could come to the realization that we had different needs, concerns, and interests and say, "That's O.K. because it's what makes our Sisterhood so exciting and worthwhile."
We found that we had all been programmed in one way or another for failure, and we vowed we would support each other as we worked on "deprogramming" ourselves.
We openly explored our own sexuality and learned to accept the sexual orientation of others.
We moved from a safe distance to a profound love for each other.
We found that our group wasn't whole unless each woman was present-- each woman in her own uniqueness.
We could weep with those who wept and rejoice with those who rejoiced.
We could grow without fear of the results because we had the support of our sisters in that exploration.
We could indeed become a supportive community for each other-- one with love, challenge, joy, and conviction.
We could explore theology in relation to our experience and make it express the beauty and wholeness of our short "Shalom" together.
We could commit ourselves to the expanding of our Sisterhood to include all our sisters outside of the group, outside of Grailville, for we knew that Sisterhood was possible because we had experienced it.
Indeed it was truly worthwhile to share.

Linda Brebner

The Words of Worship: Beyond Liturgical Sexism

Our growing awareness of the sexist problems inherent in our language provides us with a valuable new hermeneutical tool.

JAMES F. WHITE

† THE PROBLEM of sexist language in worship has caught up with us; there is no avoiding it any longer, though I still hear many evasions. The most common excuse: "Language is not that important." My usual rejoinder: "How long has it been since you last used the term 'nigger'?" So long as someone uses that less-than-human term for a black person, it is impossible for him or her to progress toward racial justice: Language is not an indifferent matter, as Earl Butz discovered. A change in speech habits is necessary if we are to change attitudes.

No longer do we have a choice to be concerned or not about sexist language. A fundamental issue of justice is involved, and the church cannot be silent in matters of justice without being a disobedient church. Obedience to Christ means according justice to others just as we desire justice for ourselves. To determine what constitutes justice in this instance, to be sure, may not be simple, but we should have little difficulty in agreeing that an obedient church has no choice about opposing injustice.

The importance of public worship in this matter is only slightly less obvious. Nowhere else does the average Christian so frequently take part in explicit theological statements and actions as in Christian worship. Nothing helps form a Christian's thinking about God and one's responsibility to others so persistently as continued engagement in public worship. Worship shapes the theology of the laity through the weekly repetition of constant elements of worship plus unique local and temporal elaborations of them by the gathered community.

Feminine Images

Let us begin with the good news. Our growing awareness of the sexist problems inherent in language provides us with a valuable new hermeneutical tool. It opens to us aspects of God's word to which we have hitherto been deaf and provides us with a deeper sensitivity for hearing what God says through Scripture. One soon realizes the importance of accurate biblical translations. Frequently the original texts make no indication of gender; it has been supplied gratuitously by translators. This is

true of the pronoun *tis*, often translated "a man" instead of "anyone." In many cases, sexual distinctions have been dubbed in for the sake of readability by modern translators when these distinctions do not exist in original texts. More nearly accurate translations would not make such arbitrary distinctions. Such knowledge ought to be an incentive to more intensive study of the Scriptures in the original languages.

But there is a more important level of awareness, sensitive to the variety of metaphors in which Scripture refers to God in feminine images. Jesus, for instance, in an image rarely used in worship, refers to himself as wishing to gather people together as a "mother hen gathers her brood under her wings" (Matt. 23:27, Luke 13:34). Only one who has kept chickens can know how protective a mother hen is and what a marvelous image she is of divine protectiveness. In the prologue to John's Gospel, translators shy away from an exact rendition of the last verse (1:18), which says literally, "God's only begotten, he who is in the Father's breast." The word *kolpos* (breast) rarely makes it into English, the RSV being an exception here. Apparently even the faint suggestion of female anatomy for God troubles us, though anthropomorphisms abound in Scripture.

We feel uncomfortable with such passages as Deuteronomy 32:18: "You forsook the creator who begot you and cared nothing for God who brought you to birth." Jesus compares his death and resurrection to labor pains and childbirth (John 16:21). Much of our theology of Christian initiation might be more balanced if the image of new birth had developed throughout history as did images of incorporation or forgiveness. New birth is equally as prominent for initiation in the New Testament. Baptismal regeneration became a most controversial term, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. A positive approach to the birth images in baptism (John 3:5, Titus 3:5) gives an important dimension to God's gift of new life in the body of Christ.

Prenatal and Postnatal Events

Protestantism has yet to recover those aspects of Christology witnessed to by some of the minor christological feasts. It is probably no accident that,

Dr. White, professor of Christian worship at Southern Methodist University, is spending a sabbatical in Vermont.

despite widespread recovery of much of the Christian year, Protestants have not seen much value yet in the feasts of Naming, Presentation, Annunciation and Visitation. The biblical evidence, of course, is in the first two chapters of Luke, but there is far more there than just shepherds and angels. Prenatal and postnatal events are part of the history of salvation, though we ignore them. The Annunciation (March 25) has had powerful appeal to the greatest painters of past ages; we have looked in another direction, though this feast once signaled the start of the civil year. It still marks the beginning of the climactic event in the salvation of the whole human race. And it is entirely in the hands of a woman. Traditionally an angel is sexless, and the only other person in Luke 1:26-38 is a woman, Mary. There are parallels with her kinswoman, Elizabeth — John is not the only forerunner. Visitation (May 31) has intrigued musicians with the *Magnificat*. In the *Magnificat* the social creed of the Christian church is articulated in its most concise form — all in the context of a dialogue between two peasant women (Luke 1:39-56).

The postnatal stories are too good to miss, too. The Naming of Jesus (Luke 2:21) stresses Christ's identification with human society, particularly in receiving a common Hebrew name on the eighth day (January 1). The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:22-38) on the 40th day (February 2) is the first event in which humans proclaim the meaning of the Christ child. And that proclamation comes first from the lips of the elderly — a man and a woman, Simeon and Anna. What a difference it would have made if the church had based its theology of ordination on these two prototypical proclaimers of God's word! I cite these passages only to show rich images that we would probably not have overlooked if they had been masculine. Fresh sensitivity to the female role in the process of salvation will help us discover other elements in God's word which we have missed.

Limiting God, Limiting People

There seem to be two stages in applying our sensitivity about sexist language in worship: the negative stage of eliminating exclusive language and the positive one of developing language that affirms both sexes. Unfortunately, most who have worked in this field have been content with the first of these. *Actually we need language even more explicitly sexual than that we now use — language that affirms both sexes in our knowledge of God and of humanity.*

The negative stage, of course, is very important. It comes in the realization that the English language has definitely changed in the past decade and that such terms as "man," "mankind," "men" and the masculine pronouns are no longer being used in the familiar generic sense. This change has been recog-

nized by the National Council of Teachers of English, a group more likely to acknowledge current usages than to initiate new ones.

The negative stage has two implications for the language of worship. First of all, it becomes increasingly problematic to limit God to masculine images — and the words "he," "his" and "himself" are no longer so inclusive as they once were. Words that imply that God is masculine, as these pronouns now do, are much more restrictive and limiting in naming God than such terms were in the past. Today a hymn, a prayer or creed that uses these pronouns says something much more narrow than it did a decade ago. Since we hardly want to set limits to God, these words must be replaced by more inclusive language. This task challenges us to broaden our comprehension of the deity. The Section on Worship of the United Methodist Church has published a list of 200 ascriptions for God. Perusal of this fascinating document can lead to an expansion of our language for addressing God and our comprehension of the Giver of Love. The first step is the purgative one of eliminating language that is now exclusively male in our speech about the Redeemer of Israel.

Second, the same negative stage is necessary with language regarding people. In the past, it meant one thing to say "who for us men and for our salvation." Today, that phrase means something quite different. The new International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) translation, now used by many denominations, says "for us and for our salvation." There is no more need to limit people today than to limit God. The negative step means pruning away terms that are exclusive in present use: "man,"

Annunciation

✦ DOWN! downward plummets Gabriel
in his annual flight
on spangled wings, his voice of gold,
his visage silver-bright.

But Mary greets him with a yawn,
a cold, inquiring, "Well?"
until he fairly cowers to say
the joy he came to tell,

And stammers in his voice of gold,
the jeweled jaw shocked shut,
when Mary in her voice of brass
shrugs and snaps, "So what?"

Poor Gabriel! He blurts the news,
and flaps away, unsure,
for modern-day Magnificats
are not what once they were!

GLORIA MAXSON.

ment, mankind. Salvation is for all, not for just one sex, as these words now imply.

Inclusive Terms

The positive stage, on the other hand, is both more creative and more difficult. It is the phase in which we develop inclusive terms for our understanding of God and for our speech about humanity. It implies an even more explicitly sexual language than we now use, but a language in which female and male terms are balanced. It means that when God created us in God's own image, we were created male and female. We do not seek a gray, sexless imagery, as if God created us neuter, but the rich coloration of both sexes. This effort is not easy; it is simpler to follow the familiar monochrome. But when we take this step, we soon find that our visions of both God and humanity are greatly expanded.

How do we reach this creative stage? We begin with Scripture and tradition. We find, once we start looking, traces scattered everywhere of the female side of God, the feminine half of humanity. Eleanor McLaughlin reminds us that Chrysostom could call God "Sister, Mother" and Anselm could pray to Jesus as Mother. It helps to know that Chrysostom and Anselm could do it. We need to recall the medieval debates on the Christian life as reflecting either Mary or Martha. Our first steps must be taken on familiar ground but with a keenness of sight we have never had before. We must discover the femi-

Dark Advent

† BEGUILLED by cold we enter winter's ark,
the sky behind us narrowing to wink.
In vain we hold a candle in this dark.

The solstice reaches in its falling arc
far as rank clouds can stretch or sun can sink.
Beguiled by cold we enter winter's ark.

We probe for life in evergreen's dry bark,
but limbs are strung with needles black as ink.
In vain we hold a candle in this dark.

We hope through laughter to engage a spark,
but ice has frozen humor's ductile link.
Beguiled by cold we enter winter's ark.

With groping faith a savior's birth we mark,
since Mary's term is ending now, we think.
In vain we hold a candle in this dark,

for virgin birth's induced by song of lark
and virgin milk is summer's warming drink.
Beguiled by cold and locked in winter's ark,
in vain we hold a candle in this dark.

KATHRYN CHRISTENSON.

time images already available in Scripture and tradition before we can develop new ones.

A word of caution may be helpful. It now seems that more recent materials, especially hymns, are the worst linguistically. Not until the 20th century did hymnists get aroused about the brotherhood of man. Victorians were not concerned about "lesser breeds without the law." But the "good guys" of the social gospel could cry: "Join hands, then, brothers of the faith," meaning something twice as inclusive as those words now signify. Others could sing: "Till sons of men shall learn thy love," or "The voice of God is calling/ Its summons unto men," not realizing how exclusive those lines would sound today. Someone has suggested that we need to change only one letter in another hymn: "Wise up, O men of God!" All these and many more hymns now suggest the opposite of what they intend. Consequently, they may have to go unsung for a time.

What do we do with much of the older hymnody and language of prayer? I do not believe that it should all be discarded, though one can be more selective in choosing it. There are plenty of alternatives to singing "Good Christian Men, Rejoice." But even that can be mended once people learn to substitute "folk" for "men," "one" for "man," and "humans" for "mankind." In so doing, we are really reinforcing the writer's intentions by translating a previous language into a present one. And there are some surprisingly good words we never before appreciated, such as the 15th century "O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing." The translations of the International Consultation on English Texts will be helpful for creeds, canticles, doxologies and the Lord's Prayer. One can check the new *Episcopal Book of Common Prayer* (1976) or the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978) to see ways by which exclusive sexist language has been avoided, though less intentionality in providing language that affirms both sexes seems evident.

Acknowledging the Limits

There is bad news, too. We need to know the limits before we can do anything responsibly new in worship. There are some things we ought to do that we have not done; there are also things that we ought not to do. It is only by knowing the limits that we can get a more radical view of unexplored possibilities.

First of all, we are not free to rewrite Scripture. There is no doubt that the world view within which it was written was patriarchal. We must be careful to distinguish between those things that were culturally contingent and those things which are essential to the gospel. Paul says many things about women which reflect his culture. But he also makes what must be the most radically egalitarian statement in all of Scripture, in Galatians 3:27-28: "Baptized into union with him [Christ], you have all put on Christ

as a garment. There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus." This equality is based on baptism. It does not hurt to know that women baptized persons in the early church, that fonts have been designed in the shape of a pregnant woman, that womb imagery is clear in the Easter vigil, or that Calvin and Wesley, on the other hand, were vehemently opposed to women baptizing. The more we look, the more we find.

But Scripture cannot be rewritten, though it frequently deserves retranslation. *Anthropos* can be translated "human being" instead of "man," but we cannot use *anēr* as anything but "man." I do not think we can change the word "Father" when it appears in Scripture. But, as indicated above, we have numerous possibilities for addressing God in prayer. I now realize it was wrong of me for many years always to begin grace at the family table with the words "Heavenly Father," especially with my three daughters and wife present. I had countless other options and never exercised them. How narrow an image of God that one ascription now implies! My images of God have grown since I began reaching out for alternatives to that invariable "Heavenly Father."

We are not free to avoid the masculinity of Jesus Christ, who, as a concrete human individual, had to have sexuality. But the important thing is not that Jesus became man but that he became human, one of us with whom every woman and man can identify. Thus the clause in the creed of the United Church of Canada, "who has come in the true Man, Jesus," no longer means what it did in 1969. The important thing is that God became human, not that God became masculine. Still, I do not yet see any alternatives to referring to the second member of the Trinity as "he" or "him."

God-Talk and People-Talk

Okay, those are the limits; but what are some of the possibilities in actual worship language? Pronouns give us the most trouble. Many times our prayers would be greatly improved by rigorous excision of any third-person pronouns. Simply say "you" when speaking of God, and in almost all cases it will be a better prayer by being made vocative. Of course, this language will not work in parts of the service not addressed to God. Here we can change "God . . . he" to "God . . . God" or to some such naming as "God . . . our Sovereign." "God . . . his" can give way to "God . . . God's" or some such possessive as "God . . . our Sovereign's." The really difficult pronoun is the reflexive. I have turned "God . . . himself" into "God . . . Godself." I admit I do not like neologisms, but I find that, with use, "Godself" becomes less abrasive and reminds me that I am speaking of a God who is more than masculine. The easy way is to avoid the reflexive



altogether, but I am fond of speaking of God as giving Godself to us (as in the sacraments), and nothing other than a reflexive is strong enough to say that adequately.

With regard to humans, we have many possibilities. I do not find it strained to double pronouns; I do not mind saying "he or she" or "hers or his" or "him or her" every time a third-person pronoun is necessary. I do not like "he/she" or "s/he," as one does not speak slashes. Written language, in my opinion, should correspond with spoken, not vice versa.

There is also a wide variety of instances in which it is not awkward to say "women and men." In Chaucer's time the words "brethren" and "sistren" were both used, but the latter was lost (about 1530), to our impoverishment. More inclusive terms ought to be used if it is clear that such is intended ("poet" and "Jew" rather than "poetess" and "Jewess," which happen to be diminutives). Words that now clearly indicate sex ("man," "mankind") should be balanced with their parallels ("woman," "woman-kind"). If such exclusive terms cannot be balanced, then it is better to avoid them in preference for single inclusive terms such as "people" and "humanity."

It should be clear that we have just begun to explore new possibilities both in God-talk and people-talk. There are no ready-made answers. Some things will sound awkward for a while, just as, not so long ago, addressing God as "you" did. Familiarity soon makes novelties sound natural. "Godself" may not bother us for long, or we may find a better reflexive. But I am convinced that we cannot remain content with "God himself" much longer.

A search which begins because of the imperative of justice may have major side effects in helping us come to a more profound knowledge of God and the

*Inclusive
Language*



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March 25, 1981

MCC of the Resurrection
1919 Decatur
Houston, Texas 77007

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Jesus, God and Savior,

I want to thank you all for the work that you have done about 'inclusiveness' and 'inclusive language'. And I want to acknowledge that you and I and many, many others have been really hurting as we have seen our efforts at inclusiveness abused as some sisters and brothers have attempted to use those efforts to proclaim universalism different from the universal message that Jesus offers, and to proclaim the false message that anyone who worships Jesus Christ as the One God is idolatrous. And I want to express joy that your process has been so congregational.

But I want also to share with you the area in which I perceive you to be wrong. You say 'All language forms are pleasing to God when they are used to preach the Gospel.' There is a sense in which that is certainly true. But there is a sense in which that is not at all true. Until recently some parts of the Christian church proclaimed the Gospel, administered the rites and Sacraments and prayed in a language not really used by the people. That has been reformed. I am a former Episcopalian and the historic articles of Religion in that church put it this way, "It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have public Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood of the people."

I grew up in York, Pennsylvania...Pennsylvania Dutch Country. And I remember Evangelical churches there which conducted services there in German, because that was the daily language of the people.

If I carry the Word of God to sisters and brothers in Mexico, but insist on doing it in English because that is a language pleasing to God, that fact will not please God because the language is not understood. If I insist on conducting service here in Tallahassee in Latin because that is a language pleasing to God, that fact will not please God because the language is not (generally) understood.

And, I believe, we have to face the fact that there are many, many women and men who simply cannot understand our language when we use heavily-gendered and non-inclusive language.

Rev. Martha Blacklock, an Episcopal priest, writing in THE WITNESS of February, 1981 says, "After all, most practicing Christians first heard the Gospel in sexist language - archaic sexist language at that - and we knew it was speaking to us. We brothers joined hands in the faith to serve our Father as sons. We men of God rose up to fight manfully."

*Have
felt called
to send this
to you.
Hoping things
are well.
Did you
go to Detroit?
How was it?
Peace
Joyh.*

"But one by one, many of us experienced an irreversible 'pop' that opened our ears to just how odd it really is for women to describe ourselves in those terms, and, further, how presumptuous it is for a culture to subsume the whole human race under labels that fit only half of it. And, again, how deeply questionable it is to talk about God solely in masculine ways.

"There's no going back. For people whose ears have popped, sexist language is truly an impediment to worship. If and when we complain, it's not out of cantankerous impulse, but from the pain of feeling suddenly out of place in God's house. We had thought we were at home.

"What to do?

"Stay home? Many do, convinced that the church is just another expression of patriarchal domination, and that hoping for changes from the men who govern it is about as likely as expecting most Christians to sell all they have, etc.

"Some churchgoers, however - convinced that the Word spoken in Jesus Christ is that of whole, abundant and eternal life - are working to make the words of worship reflect that reality. The decision by the bishops of the U. S. Roman Catholic Church to omit the 'generic' use of man in the liturgy is one result of this effort....".

She continues, and it is an interesting article.

You yourselves ask, how can they believe unless they hear in language forms they understand? I believe there are people out there, beloved children of God, who cannot 'hear' us in some of our heavily-gendered and non-inclusive language...any more than if we spoke in Uralic.

The issue is not whether the Gospel message is more important than the language form used to proclaim it, it is. The issue is whether we wish to be heard. Good News is only good if meaningfully shared.

I read recently of a Bible being done for some people in the South Seas. They have never seen lambs and they have no concept of shepherds. Their bible speaks of pigs, because pigs are culturally the equivalent of sheep in that society. I believe that is not a distortion of scripture, but a proper use of language forms. Certainly many would agree whether you do or not.

None of this addresses the Task Force Report. I don't have very much trouble with their suggested By-law change. I believe if one reads it carefully one hears a Unique Jesus, Christ, God and Savior proclaimed. I believe, on the other hand, that a lot of the rest of the report is an attempt to get us to deal with Universalism in our Fellowship. At this point I cannot imagine it being adopted. But I beg you not to throw away attempts to devise language forms that speak to people who's ears have popped.

God is with us,

Rev. Jos. H. Gilbert

cc: Task Force

whose psyche every word of the Lord must pass. As servants of the word we will dare to become generalists in an age of ego specialization. In terms of oral delivery or style, what dies is the old exhibitionism. May the preacher say of his or her craft what one church-arts designer said of his: "I don't want my work to call attention to itself. After the service one worshiper may say to another, 'Did you notice the candelabrum?' The other will reply, 'No, but come to think of it, it *was* beautiful.'"

Resurrection preaching has these implications: It takes death seriously, denying neither death nor the alienation, loneliness, anxiety, sin and legalism that cluster around it. Realism about death takes its cue from the Bible. In no Egyptian resurrection myth nor in the assurances of positive-possibility thinking is the following dialogue likely to occur:

Jesus: Take away the stone.

Martha: Lord, by this time there will be an odor [or, as the KJV has it, "Lord, by this time he stinketh"] (John 11:39).

A second implication is that preaching bears in its own fiber a note of victory. We have maintained as a real possibility and an accurate memory a vision of humankind "having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12) in order not to minimize the monstrosity of God's victory over death. We do not preach about the resurrection week after week, but we *do* resurrection preaching in which we offer the life of the risen Christ. To use Jürgen Moltmann's word, the preacher makes "accessible" to those who are dying Christ's resurrection from the dead.

The "how" of this appropriation belongs to the chemistry of word and Spirit. From the human vantage, the listener re-enacts the preached word's re-enactment of the movement from defeat to victory, "and then the passion of Christ and his resurrection come into force" (Luther). The note of victory implied in the original meaning of our word "gospel" may not take the form of upbeat stories, victorious-living motifs or the satisfied style of an oratory full of itself. But resurrection preaching will have an intensity and a joy about it derived from the divine drama and the whole congregation's experience of it.

Finally, resurrection preaching is relevant—though not necessarily as *Time* or *Newsweek* measures relevance. So long as people continue to work at life, despise death and hope for eternity, the perennial anguish at preaching's irrelevance need not lapse into terminal hopelessness. As hermeneuts faced with a weekly journey from the first to the 20th century, may we at least find comfort in a gospel so incarnate and so real that it creates its own meaning and makes its own way in the world. Nor is the relevance of the resurrection limited to the individual believer. When Jesus emerged from the tomb, the people of God came out with him. More than that, the risen Christ, as God's own promise of the cosmic restoration to come, establishes the link between redemption and creation, between the soul's cultivation of heaven and humanity's care of the earth, between endurance in the present day and hope for a future we are unwilling to relinquish. □

Asking the Existential Questions

Feminism must aim at a new community of mutuality for women and men, not a rejectionist community of women that impugns the humanity of men.

ROSEMARY RADFORD RUETHER

✦ REFLECTING ON one's intellectual development prematurely may be a mistake. A relatively young scholar may easily confuse fragmentary and tentative ventures with significant and formative patterns of thought and action. Nevertheless, as I look back over a journey of approximately 25 years, since I was first catapulted into intense intellectual activity at the beginning of my college work, I can discern certain basic patterns of thought and action that I have followed. These patterns show up as

movement in a great variety of directions; sometimes they have been formulated as conscious principles, sometimes manifested more as a gut instinct for what is "right." I will discuss these in terms of four large areas of personal reflection and social action: (1) the relation of Christianity to other religions; (2) the relation of Roman Catholic Christianity to other Christian bodies; (3) the relation of American identity to anti-American criticism; and (4) the relation of feminism to male-dominated culture and institutions.

My intellectual questions and research have never been purely theoretical. I have in every case dealt with existential questions about how I was to situate

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my life, my identity, my commitments. I have never taken up an intellectual issue which did not have direct connections with clarifying and resolving questions about my personal existence, about how I should align my existence with others, ideologically and socially. This is true of my research into the rise of Christology or the formation of the doctrine of the afterlife in late biblical Judaism as much as it is of my more obviously contemporary, topical writing.

In this sense all my varied intellectual interests have cohered in one way or another as an interaction of reflection and practice. This may actually be true of all intellectual life, although our concepts of "pure research" tend to deny it. But I suspect that it tends to be more consciously and concretely the case with those whose identities do not cohere readily with the dominant systems of thought and society.

Christianity's Credibility

The question of the church's claims of faith and morality vis-à-vis the other traditions of world culture was posed for me early in my academic career. Much of the church's record of social morality appeared discreditable. The problem of the church's moral and intellectual record was aggravated, in the Roman Catholic context, by the hierarchy's inability to admit to serious error in official policy (infallibility means never having to say you're sorry!). That the church as a historical body had made serious errors, such as justifying slavery or sexism, did not surprise me. But the fact that it has been unable to admit error is a serious problem for the church's understanding of its own humanity, as well as of the Christian message of salvation through repentance and forgiveness of sins. The inability of this church to resolve any of the serious pastoral dilemmas that beset it is rooted in this authority problem.

But the credibility of Christianity became suspect for me also in its foundations, not just in its later development. Things did not happen the way the official history said they did. Key ideas, such as Christology and the Trinity, had a hidden pedigree in Near Eastern and Greco-Roman religion and philosophy that contradicted the biblical heritage from which these ideas purportedly were derived. These questions launched me on a wide-ranging search into Christian origins. By unraveling the strands of early Christian development and tracing them to their sources, I hoped to discover what it all could mean to me.

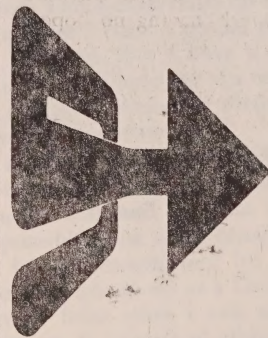
During this period (1954-60) I was influenced by two brilliant classicists, Robert Palmer and Philip Merlan at Claremont. Both of these men preferred the culture and philosophy of Greco-Roman antiquity to Christianity. Their perspective transformed my stance toward Christianity. I learned to look at the whole Judeo-Christian tradition through the eyes of those alternative communities in antiquity that were defeated by the church. The

triumphalistic presumptions about the superiority of Yahwism to Ba'alism, Christianity to paganism were no longer possible. Both biblical and nonbiblical faiths seemed to me to have good and bad points. If Christianity finally won, it was not because of its absolute difference but rather because of its ability to absorb all the viable elements of ancient Mediterranean cultures into a new synthesis. But the synthesis was itself a peculiar one and posed problems of reappropriation for today.

These questions directed me to research into early Christian development in relation to a number of specific issues. I was particularly concerned with the intersection of intellectual constructs and particular social conflicts. My Ph.D. thesis on *Gregory Nazianzus: Rhetor and Philosopher* (Cambridge University Press, 1969), as well as my research into patristic sexism, anti-Semitism and Christology, reflects these concerns.

A period of estrangement from biblical religion

How
My
Mind
Has
Changed



Fourth in a Series

in favor of alternative perspectives eventually led me back to a positive interest in Christianity and then to a clarified identification with it. If Christianity was the only viable synthesis of the traditions and cultures that remained at the end of the ancient world, then it is Christianity itself which represents the most interesting legacy of this era of human consciousness. But I am always aware that I reappropriate Christianity from a markedly different basis than do traditional Christians. I reject absolutist views of biblical religion, while at the same time finding biblical religion in its Christian form the most viable language for me to express the dialectics of human existence in relation to God. I believe that God has truly spoken through Christianity. But God is not a "Christian" and does not prefer Christians (or Jews) to the rest of humanity.

As I began to clarify my Christian identity, I asked what form of Christianity would best fit my

sensibilities. The Protestant critical consciousness was academically helpful, but Protestant worship life lacked depth for me. I had grown up as a Roman Catholic, but in an ecumenical atmosphere. My father and his family were Anglicans. Other friends and relatives were Jews, Unitarians and Quakers. Along with Catholic worship I also at various times attended Episcopal or Quaker worship. But these others were not "mine" in the same way that the Roman Catholic community was. This I have come to regard as more a matter of ecclesial "ethnicity" than of points of "superiority."

Catholicism and Ecumenism

The unleashing of the waves of renewal through the Second Vatican Council was undoubtedly a crucial fact in my development at this stage. Instead of a church sealed off against self-doubt, there suddenly appeared a church engaged in intense self-questioning. This development made Catholicism an exciting and open community within which to contribute my insights. The 1960s occurred for me between the ages of 23 and 32. This means that a critical state of my adult identity coalesced both with the decade of Catholic renewal and the decade of American social crisis. If I had been born ten years earlier, I might well stand in a different place today.

The renewal of Catholicism meant that a whole host of teachings became open questions for at least a significant sector of Catholic Christians. These ranged from current pastoral conflicts over birth control to the basic questions of how we could speak of Jesus as the Christ. My thinking could be translated into a series of writings that were part of a community engaged in revising its identity.

But Protestants also wanted to hear about these and other questions in their own terms. I have come to work and teach both as a Catholic among Catholics and as a Christian among Christians. Today I teach simultaneously at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, an institution that amalgamates the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren traditions, and at the graduate program in religious studies at Mundelein College, a Roman Catholic institution. Previous to this I taught for ten years at a black seminary, the school of religion at Howard University (1966-76). I have also had visiting appointments at various other Catholic and Protestant institutions, as well as speaking engagements throughout the country. I have encountered American Christianity in much of its variety.

Being a Catholic Christian means, for me, being an ecumenical Christian. I identify myself as a Christian in terms of what I would call the "prophetic-messianic core" of biblical faith. This I see as the norm for judging both Scripture and tradition. I do not believe that Scripture is "enough" to create the content of Christian identity.

The Protestant tendency to evacuate church history into the reapproximation of the Bible to one's contemporary preferences I find self-deluding.

We are a people with a history, much of it bad. But its bad parts also teach lessons that we should not forget. One understands the full dimensions of Christianity only by appropriating the whole of this history in its various traditions — East and West, Catholic and Protestant, the Magisterial and the Radical Reformations. Each tradition emphasizes a major element that others neglect. This is not exactly the Tillichian dialectic of "Protestant principle and Catholic substance," as though there were a dualism that could be apportioned to opposite communities. A living people exists through the constant fruitful interaction and reintegration of critical principles and historical tradition.

I would define Catholic Christianity as this whole ecumenical plurality. All particular churches exist within it as broken and partial sects. Even that communion which calls itself Catholic is also a partial and distorted reality. If I identify with this community first of all, it is not because it is the best, but because it is mine. The others are also mine in a somewhat lesser sense. This special claim on Catholicism does not mean that I have a special need to defend it. Rather it means that I have a special responsibility to question it. I have less of a responsibility to deal with the contradictions of Methodism, Lutheranism or Eastern Orthodoxy.

The prophetic ministry can be carried out authentically only within one's own community. It is only when we struggle with and for what we love that we speak responsibly. The more distant one's ties, the less one has a common base for critical conflict. What I have a right to say as a Catholic to Catholics is different from what I can say as a Christian to Protestants, as a sharer of biblical faith to Jews, as a religious person to Hindus. In each case we can engage in fruitful communication only when we have first established the ties that bind us together in community in a way that also respects the particularity of the other. Ecumenism means a shifting of the focus from attack on others to self-criticism. For example, the only group that could appropriately criticize the pope's pastoral messages in the United States in October 1979 was not the Protestants, much less the "atheists," but the Catholics. This is as it should be.

Christians and Socialism

But the 1960s were the years not only of Catholic renewal but also of exploding social consciousness in America. I, like others in that "generation," became intensely involved in the civil rights movement in the south and urban north, in the antiwar movement and in feminism. I experienced these issues not as a series of alternating commitments but as an expanding consciousness of the present human so-



Rosemary Radford Ruether.

cial dilemma. This dilemma appears on many levels, from the intrapersonal and interpersonal questions of identity and relationship to the social, economic and ecological systems that we construct to incarnate human life in expanding networks. The pathology of unjust and distorted relationships takes different forms on different levels. But one can understand the ramifications of one such relationship, such as racism or sexism, only by tracing it in relation to the others.

I have gradually developed a methodology of analysis which I share with a community of thinkers who would identify themselves as both Christians and socialists. This means that, even when speaking of a particular issue, such as sexism, I am concerned to situate this issue in its interconnections with class, race and economic structures. This means also that I relate the critique of social pathology and the lifting up of social alternatives to the biblical prophetic-messianic tradition. This does not mean that the biblical heritage is just a parallel language for saying the same thing. Rather it is a way of grounding the whole struggle in order to give it both greater faith and endurance and better resources to criticize its own pathology than would be the case with a secular social analysis. But I believe that socialism and biblical faith are not for two different communities, one secular and the other religious, but for the same community, the human community, divided between its ambivalent reality and its hope for salvation.

Although many social critics have taken America as the particular scapegoat for contemporary evils, I have rejected anti-Americanism. If I criticize America more severely, it is again because it is my own, not because it is worse. I find it unhelpful and self-righteous to gorge oneself on self-loathing and to

establish an imaginary relationship with foreign "guerrillas." If Americans are to relate social and religious criticism authentically to themselves, they have first to take responsibility for who they are. This means finding the points at which the American tradition of religion and politics can provide a positive base for change. For example, we should not reject the dearly won tradition of civil democracy but should expand its logic to include economic democracy in a way that can speak to the American conscience. It is at this point that I have disagreed with some of the more apocalyptic or countercultural critics on the New Left.

A Feminist Analysis

My concern for feminism has been long-standing but never exclusive. I have wished to ask which feminist perspective is most adequate to address the problem of sexism. Yet feminists fear the conflict between the desire for internal criticism and the need to avoid acrimonious factionalism. Feminism in the United States spans a broad ideological spectrum. Civil-libertarian feminism is primarily concerned with "equal rights"—i.e., equal access of women to the public world of work, power and education. This feminism doesn't question the economic system within which it seeks these equal rights. Another, much smaller group of feminists is made up of socialists who link feminism with fundamental changes in the economic relation of home and work, and the class structure of paid labor. A third feminism is countercultural. It is concerned more with radical changes in symbolic consciousness and sexual identities.

There are also religious counterparts to these positions—evangelical and liberal Christian feminists and socialist Christian feminists. Radical cultural feminists believe that God the Father should be rejected in favor of a revived religion of the Goddess. Distinct feminisms appear in different ethnic and religious contexts—black feminism, Chicano feminism, Jewish feminism and (let us hope) Muslim feminism.

Feminist ecumenism is no easier to establish than Christian ecumenism, especially because feminists are forming an identity in an embattled relation to dominant institutions. My view is that none of these feminisms are "wrong." Although women as a whole are marginated by sex, they also exist in relation to males of every class, race and religion. This means that feminism necessarily must take a number of specific forms in different contexts. A feminism that deals only with equal rights or only with sexual orientation is valid in its context. But an adequate feminist analysis must embrace the whole spectrum of the female condition in such a way as to take into account the different situations of non-Christian women, working-class women, black women, married women, etc. Ideological conflict comes from

absolutizing a particular limited context and drawing dogmatic conclusions; i.e., "only lesbians are truly feminists," "feminists can't be Christians," or "feminism is a white, middle-class women's problem."

In terms of religious feminism, I have been critical of an evangelical feminism whose proponents believe that they can solve the problem with better translation and exegesis but cannot reckon with serious ideological and moral error in Scripture and tradition. On the other hand, I find the "rejectionist" wing of feminist spirituality engaged in serious distortions and pretensions. Although biblical religion is sexist, it is not reducible to sexism alone! It has also been dealing with human issues, such as estrangement and oppression and the hope for reconciliation and liberation. It has been doing this on male terms, failing to apply the same critique to women. Biblical feminists use these same liberating principles of the biblical tradition. But they make the principles say new things by applying them to sexism.

I believe that countercultural feminists delude themselves when they hope that somewhere there is a "pure" feminist religion or tradition from which

one can overthrow "patriarchy." All inherited culture, including the texts of goddess religion, has been biased in favor of men. Therefore, everywhere we must be engaged in a version of the same critique of culture. We must be able to claim the critical principles of every tradition and also to find how to transform the tradition by applying these principles to sexism. This means that our relation to every inherited tradition must be dialectical.

Finally, and most importantly, feminism must aim at a new community of mutuality for women and men, not a rejectionist community of women that impugns the humanity of men. This latter stance I regard not as a radical but as an immature position. That humiliated people succumb to desires for revenge is understandable; it is "only human." But it is not what I want to call "feminist ethics!"

If I were to define a common thread of thought and action that runs through the various issues, it would be that of dialectical methodology. A dialectical methodology seeks to be both radical and catholic in such a way that the radical side is not just an "attack," but the critical word of the tradition itself to judge, transform and renew it in new and more humanizing ways for all of us. □

Two Worlds: Beauty and Oppression

Reconciling the two is not easy, yet they come together in the Jesus story.

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN

There is beauty and there are the humiliated. Whatever difficulties the enterprise may present, I would like never to be unfaithful either to the one or the other [from *Lyrical and Critical Essays*, by Albert Camus, who speaks of "the humiliated" where I choose (I hope in faithfulness to him) to speak of "the oppressed"].

✦ IT IS THE MOMENT before dawn. I sit and watch a landscape come alive. Shapes emerge out of nothingness (creation all over again), slowly transformed from strangeness to familiarity. Trees, stones, a wall, a chipmunk. Silence, blessedly invaded by a white-throated sparrow ("Oh Sam Pea-body come to tea"). Finally the sun inflames the highest point of the maple tree that towers over the lesser pines. How wonderful to be alive.

And yet . . .

During the very moments when I am enthralled by the unfolding of a summer morning, people whom I respect are de-

nied such pleasant options; either that, or they have rejected them for other options.

I reflect—in the harsh light of day now—that at this very moment Diego is organizing in steamy Chimbote, that Gustavo is struggling with the poorest of the poor in the Rimac slum of Lima, that Pepe is . . . well, better not say what Pepe is up to, or even which of many Pepes I mean, since what they do on behalf of the oppressed in their oppressive countries frequently lands them in prison.

I

How can I bring these two worlds together? Diego and Gustavo and Pepe 1, Pepe 2, Pepe 3, Pepe 4 are entitled to beauty. And I have an obligation to the oppressed. I am not entitled to sunlight exclusively; they are entitled to more than darkness. So I yearn for a way of living that can be responsive to, and is described by, both the slow movement of Beethoven's String Quartet opus 59, no. 2, and also the plight of the farm

workers in the central valley of California; that can find resources to create a new synthesis of reflection and action in both the beauty of the *Archduke Trio* and also the oppressed of the *poblacioneros* in Santiago de Chile.

It is not an easy task. I think I know a little about what it means to speak of "oppression" even though I have seldom experienced it. But I know very little about what it means to speak of "beauty," even though I have frequently experienced it. (It's a bind similar to the one St. Augustine got caught in over the concept of time. He knew what it was, he reported, until somebody asked him to explain it.)

The dictionary gives some help: directly—"the quality or aggregate of qualities in a person or thing that gives pleasure to the senses or pleasurably *exalts the mind or spirit*"; and inadvertently—"a particularly *graceful*, ornamental or excellent quality." "Graceful," grace-filled. A good start.

I'll go beyond the dictionary by proposing that we need not equate beauty

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have been designed as warning to worshippers of the goddess that such behavior (i.e. disobedience of the father god) had once caused all people to be expelled from their original home in paradise.²³ It is enlightening to look at some of the mythology that was alive at about the time that the story of the fall began.

On the island of Crete, the female deity was sometimes referred to as the serpent goddess.²⁴ She was often pictured with snakes wound around her breasts or writhing along her arms or, most frequently, holding a snake in either hand.²⁵ We also find a fruit tree represented in the iconography of Crete. Repeatedly, the goddess and her attendants are shown beside the tree.²⁶

In Sumaria, the goddess Nidaba was the scribe of the Sumarian heaven, the patron deity of writing. She was at times depicted as a serpent and among her designations are "Divine Serpent Lady" and "Learned One of the Holy Chambers". The goddess Inanna (Innanni), who was closely connected with serpent worship, was called "The Divine Mother who Reveals Laws". Nina, the most ancient of the serpent goddesses in Sumaria, was known to be an oracular deity. A prayer to her taken from a Sumarian tablet includes the words, "O Nina of priestly rites, Lady of precious decrees, Prophetess of Deities art Thou."²⁷ Stephen Langdon writes, "The evidence points to an original serpent goddess as the interpreter of dreams of the unrevealed future."²⁸

In Elam, just east of Sumar, archaeological evidence suggests a particularly strong reverence for the serpent goddess which had its roots in magic.²⁹ The Hebrew and Aramaic word for "magic" came from words that mean "snake."³⁰

The Babylonian Ishtar was depicted in seals with a serpent-entwined scepter. She was often called a prophetess or "She who directs the oracles".³¹ In legends, drawings, and sculptures of Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, the serpent appears.³² In Delphi the priestesses who delivered the goddess' oracles were called the Pythia. A snake known as Python sat coiled around the stool upon which they sat.³³

The strongest connections between the serpent and wisdom come from Egypt. At this point it might be helpful to recall that the Israelites, according to the Bible, spent several hundred years in Egypt. The date of the Exodus into Palestine was probably somewhere around 1300 B.C.B.³⁴ Biblical scholars place the writing of the story of the fall at about 950 B.C.E.³⁵ We can be sure that the memory of Egyptian mythology was still very present in the oral tradition of this time.

In Egypt, the picture of a cobra was the hieroglyphic sign for the word goddess. The cobra was known as the Eye, symbolic of mystic insight and wisdom.³⁶ The Creator-Primeval serpent of Egyptian mythology declares:

*"I am the overflow of the Primeval Flood, He who emerged from the waters.
I am the "Provider of Attributes" serpent with its many coils.
I am the Scribe of the Divine Book
Which says what has been said and effects what is yet to be."³⁷*

The goddess Hathor of Egypt was worshipped as the Eye of Wisdom and the Serpent Lady. She was also known as the Lady of the Sycamore. The "fig tree", "Sycamore tree" and "Black mulberry tree" seem to be used interchangeably in this connection. The tree was known as the Body of Hathor on earth. To eat of it was to partake of the body of the Goddess. Some Egyptian murals depicted the goddess within this tree, passing out the fruit as the food of eternity and life after death.³⁸ Merlin Stone points out

that in this context it is intriguing that when Adam and Eve discovered that they were naked, they made aprons of fig leaves to cover themselves.³⁹

There was a second tree in the garden of Eden which was forbidden the tree of life. Yahweh banished Adam and Eve from the garden so that they would not eat of it and live forever. (Genesis 3:22) In addition to the fact that this sounds suspiciously like Hathor's sycamore or fig tree immortality is an idea almost universally connected with the serpent. Although it is not possible to clearly delineate what any particular mythological symbol exactly "means" universally, Eliade speaks of "webs" of themes which do seem to become universal. In a "web", a pattern of several symbols is nearly always seen occurring together. One such web is moon - water - woman - serpent - regeneration. Any one of these themes is nearly always found in company with some of the others.⁴⁰ "Regeneration" or immortality is one of the most important recurring meanings of the symbol of the snake. The serpent sheds its skin and appears to be born again. Like the woman, the moon, and the waters, it goes through cycles of change symbolic of death, rebirth, and the cyclical rhythm of the cosmos. This is another way in which the goddess is connected to the serpent.

It becomes apparent that for those who first heard the story of the fall, the presence of the serpent and the magical fruit tree had connotations which are lost to us now. This is borne out in the story itself. The serpent, according to the story, was created after Yahweh gave the command to Adam not to eat of the tree of good and evil (Genesis 2:19); yet in its conversation with the woman it knew the reason for that command (Gen. 3:5). The serpent, like the fruit of the tree, was connected with esoteric knowledge. It has correctly been observed that the serpent told the truth about the effects of eating of the tree ("You will not die"), and Yahweh did not. Something does not quite add up here — one of the creatures of Yahweh seems to be wiser and more truthful than he is. I would suggest that the serpent, and especially the serpent in conversation with the woman, is meant to connote the goddess and the ancient religions in

which serpents are the oracular deities and women are seen as full human beings. (the Hebrew *nahash*, which means "serpent" is almost exactly the same as the verb *nahash*, which only appears in the Piel and means "to observe signs and practice divination".⁴¹) One of Yahweh's punishments for disobedience in the story of the fall is to "Put enmity between (the serpent) and the woman" (Genesis 3:15). Can we now assume that there was good reason why the patriarchs of the Hebrew religion might want to put a stop to communication between the woman and the serpent?

The serpent's esoteric knowledge and wisdom might have to do with the fact that it, and the goddess, were far more ancient deities than Yahweh. It is interesting that in Proverbs 8, another female figure, Wisdom, emerges as one who existed before creation.

It is clear that the story of the fall was part of the continuing battle by the Levites to suppress female religion. Another purpose of the story was to explain the "place" of women and to make sure that they stayed there. Yahweh says to the woman, "Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." (Genesis 3:16). This combined with the woman's creation out of man and for man (Genesis 2:22-23) and her disobedience of Yahweh (Genesis 3:6; everyone has conveniently forgotten for 3,000 years that Adam was disobedient too), made the outrageous status of women seem perfectly reasonable.

All of the Old Testament creation stories were in some way a polemic against the goddess, and so against women. They worked. We have been believing them, on one level or another, for thousands of years. The worshippers of the male god Yahweh and/or his son have had to repeatedly call upon the original fabrication in order to legitimize their rejection of all that is female, dark, and/or sensual. There is finally something very unconvincing about all this righteous battling for light, maleness, and dry unmessy rationality. Philo writes, "For it was fitting that man should rule over immortality and everything good, but woman over death and everything vile."⁴³ "It was the more imperfect and ignoble element, the female, that made a beginning of transgression

and lawlessness, while the male made the beginning of reverence and modesty and all good, since he was better and more perfect."⁴⁴

It is on this point that Tertullian becomes completely hysterical.

And do you not know that you are each an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of your lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway: You are the unsealer of that forbidden tree: You are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert — that is, death — even the Son of God had to die.⁴⁵

It would be nice if we could laugh at these reversals, but they cut too deep, and the world has not changed all that much since they were written. Women have learned so effectively the lesson of our own "inherent evil" that an overwhelming number of women report that they feel "guilt" when they are raped or beaten by their husbands or sexually harassed. The myth of the fall is alive and well in the mass media and it brainwashes us every day. Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of this is that this mythic system has not only legitimized man's hatred and fear of women, but has also created hatred and distrust of ourselves. It becomes clear that the real "original sin" of women is believing the story of the fall and internalizing self-hatred and guilt.⁴⁶

Stephen Crites suggests that the function of story is to orient people to the "great powers" that determine the reality of their world. For women, the supreme "great power" is patriarchy. The stories which surround us orient us to this particular "great power" very effectively. An end to patriarchy would mean not a reinterpretation of the Yahweh of the Bible, but an end to this father god. If the Bible records a continuing battle to suppress female religion, and thereby to oppress women, unless we come to understand biblical religion in a radically new way, there is no hope for real change. Again this is the pain of social revolution or conversion. It is a slow and lonely process. Our entire sacred story needs to shift. We need to start telling new stories . . .

Genesis One

In the beginning the patriarchy created the heaven and the earth. The Mother, earth, teemed with a chaos of life in all forms; green trees growing in jungles and forests of riotous beauty, animals running over plains and deserts, and waves crashing upon rocks and sand. The dark slow earth and the deeper waters of mystery were in harmony, and the patriarchy hovered above it all.

And the patriarchy said, "Let there be masculinity." And there was masculinity. And the patriarchy saw that the masculinity was intimidating; and the patriarchy separated the masculinity from the femininity. The patriarchy called the masculine "man", and the feminine it called "woman". And men and women became these things.

And the patriarchy said, "Let there be separations in the midst of the earth, and let them separate the people of the earth," for the patriarchy was afraid of the chaos of diversity. So it made the separations to separate the male, the white, the heterosexual, and the rich, from the female, the dark, the homosexual, and the poor. And it was so. And the patriarchy called the separations the Social Order. And the people learned to love only those who were on their side of the separations.

And the patriarchy said, "Let the powerful people gather together to use their power, and let the oppressed ones be silent." The patriarchy called

What Do the Synoptics Say? The Sexuality of Jesus

Rosemary Ruether

IN ASKING THE QUESTION of the norms of a moral life, a life compatible with the quest for the Kingdom of God, Christians are wont to turn to the example of Jesus, to ask what norm is found in his life and teachings. But even to ask this question about sexuality is difficult. To ask about the sexuality of Jesus is for most Christians to border on blasphemy. Even for Protestants the basic image of Jesus is that of sexlessness. Jesus is the pure one, the holy one, the sinless one. Therefore all questions about his sexuality are taboo. Sexuality and holiness are incompatible. This is still the basic view of Jesus in all Christian circles, whether they have a celibate ideal or not.

For Christians of the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, this model of the sexlessness of Jesus is very explicit. Celibacy here is still regarded as the higher Christian ideal, the life style which anticipates the eschatological order where there will be "neither marrying or giving in marriage"—the "angelic life" as the Church Fathers would have called it. Marriage is an inferior option in the Christian era. For many Church Fathers, such as Jerome and Augustine, all sexual relations, even procreative relations within lawful marriage, are venially sinful because of the lust that accompanies sex.

But even if all sex is not seen as sinful, it belongs to the lesser world of mutability and death. It represents the very heart of that world of birth and decay, of mortality, from which we have been freed by the Resurrection and the new life in Christ. The committed Christian signals that redemption from mortality by choosing the celibate life. Obviously Jesus cannot be a lesser role model for the eschatological life that he bestows on others. He must be not only celibate, but freed from all sexual desire from his very beginnings. Born of a virgin without the accompaniment of sinful lust, he alone is "naturally" what others strive to be through discipline; the sexless man, freed of all sexual libido. This is the point of view that lies behind the traditional "sexless" picture of Jesus.

How well does this picture of Jesus the celibate accord with the gospels? In traditions such as the virgin birth this ideal has already been, to some extent, incorporated into the Synoptic picture. But in the most historical layers of the Synoptics, this ideal is not confirmed. Jesus never talks about sexuality as though it were the heart of the sin from which we must be

freed. On the contrary, the sins he condemns have more to do with pride, arrogance, avarice and faithlessness—the sins of religious hypocrisy, the sins of the powerful among the religious and economic elite against the little ones—the despising of widows and orphans, the religious fetishism that hates the unwashed and the outsider.

In criticizing these kinds of sins, Jesus in the Synoptic tradition is notable in his sympathy for the prostitute, for that class of woman whom society uses and shuns as the example of sexual sinfulness. Both the Old Testament and the later Christian tradition uses *harlotry* as a key expression of sinfulness and apostasy. In contrast, Jesus and the Synoptics seem to regard sexual fallenness mildly. Harlotry does not put one as far away from the Kingdom of God as religious hypocrisy. The harlot may well be the first to hear the gospel, to have true faithfulness to Jesus, in contrast to the religious rigorist, who cannot hear the message.

This is not a question of condoning harlotry as such. It is an expression of Jesus' social and religious iconoclasm. Jesus suggests that the sins of those whom society condemns as sinners may shut people less to the Word of God than the pride of the righteous. In the words of Matthew 21:31: "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and harlots will go into the Kingdom of God before you" [the righteous]. To put it in modern language, the prostitutes and bookies will go into the Kingdom of God ahead of the clerics and the theologians.

The Non-Ascetic Jesus

In many passages of the Synoptics Jesus is portrayed in ways that we might characterize as anti-ascetic. He sits at table with sinners (Matt. 9:10-14; Mark 2:15-18; Luke 5:29-33). The sinful woman (presumably a prostitute) is held up to the Pharisee as a model of love and repentance. In contrast to John and his disciples, who practiced the ascetic discipline of fasting in the desert, Jesus lives in towns, in the habitations of friends. He does not fast, but eats and drinks (not grape juice). This period of Jesus' life anticipates redemption in which it is appropriate to feast, not to fast. "The Son of Man comes eating and drinking, and they say, behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Mt. 11:18; Lk. 7:34).

This anti-ascetic image of Jesus of the gospels has caused some modern writers to reject the whole tradition that Jesus was a celibate. Instead they suggest that Jesus, following the normal Jewish customs, was probably married. William Phipps, in his book *Was Jesus Married?*, is the most outspoken

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representative of this view. Phipps argues that a person so notably unascetic, a person who obviously enjoyed parties, including weddings, must have followed the normal life style that was regarded as a necessary part of being a good Jew according to the Law; namely, to marry at an early age. The fact that Jesus' wife is never mentioned should cause no problems. She might just have been staying home with the family in Nazareth. Since no children are mentioned, maybe she was infertile, or dead, when Jesus engaged in his public ministry.

All this is possible. But to argue that Jesus must have been married, and then to have to come up with an unmentioned, absent, infertile and possibly dead wife is not much of an argument on the other side either! One suspects that there is more going on here, in Phipps' argument, than meets the eye. Just as the Catholic tradition wishes to make Jesus the norm for its celibate ministry, Phipps wishes to make Jesus the norm for the Protestant married ministry. A more startling and difficult problem for both of these traditions is that Jesus does not fit either model. He appears to be *neither married nor celibate!*

Now to suggest that Jesus was neither celibate (ascetic) nor married is a dangerous idea, for it opens up the possibility that Jesus' sexuality was not channeled in either of these two acceptable directions. People who are neither married nor celibate in our society are "bachelors," perhaps even "swingers," heterosexual or homosexual. They have sexual friendships outside of marriage. What evidence is there that Jesus was such a person? There is, of course, considerable evidence that Jesus had close female friends. Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany, along with her sister Martha, are particularly recorded as close female friends of Jesus. Phipps tries to finesse this issue by suggesting that maybe Jesus was married to one or another of them (before going on to his hypothesis of the absent, sterile, dead wife).

But this will not wash. Jesus was not married to either Mary, but he was close friends with them. The Jewish tradition strictly tabooed friendship between men and women who were not married. An observant Jew should not even look at or speak to a woman who was not his wife (and he shouldn't spend too much time speaking even with his wife). This tradition is part of the reason for the surprise of the disciples when they happened upon Jesus engaged in close conversation with the Samaritan woman (aside from her outcast status as a Samaritan and a much-married one at that).

Jesus shows no evidence of having heard any such prohibitions. Moreover, his friendship with these women is a friendship with them, not a friendship mediated through males of their family. The friendship with Mary of Bethany is in the context of their household. But the sisters appear to be in charge, with the brother mentioned as a dependent, background figure.

The friendship with Mary Magdalene is outside the context of any family. Although there is actually no New Testament confirmation of the tradition that Mary Magdalene was a former prostitute (this comes from unsupported identification of Magdalene with the woman of Luke 7:36-50), Mary Magdalene was a disturbing figure in the church tradition. She was a

"loose" woman, at least in the sense of being defined by no family context whatsoever. She appears "on the road" with Jesus as his disciple and friend. It is said that he cured her of seven devils, although there is not reason to interpret this as references to a former life of prostitution. Following the general Synoptic traditions, being cured of devils refers most probably to some kind of sickness or epilepsy, which people at that time interpreted as being "possessed."

The Touchable Jesus

The special friendship of Jesus with Mary Magdalene is evident at many points in the Synoptic story. She is the leader of the women disciples who remain faithful to him at the cross and are the first witnesses to the resurrection in all four gospel accounts. Her special relationship is particularly stressed in John's resurrection story, when Jesus makes a special appearance to her. She starts to embrace him, but he counsels her not to touch him because he is in a special state of supercharged power, resurrected, but not yet ascended. Hence it might be dangerous to touch him. Contrary to the way this text is often interpreted to suggest that Jesus would never have allowed a woman to embrace him, its evident meaning is that Mary was accustomed to embrace him, and so spontaneously moved to do so at this time. He cautions her not to do so only because of his special condition. Instead he charges her with the mission of announcing his resurrection to the rest of the disciples.

It is interesting that the Gnostics particularly picked up on this tradition of the Magdalene as the special disciple and beloved of Jesus. She was the disciple to the disciples, who was given a special closeness to the Lord and understanding of his message, which she then was to interpret to the others. The male disciples, especially Peter, are portrayed as resenting this special favor given to a woman in preference over themselves. Mary's role is affirmed as a way of castigating religious male chauvinism and upholding the equality of women, in the Gnostic Christian communities.

Jesus is even portrayed as having a special love relationship with Mary Magdalene. She is his beloved disciple. She understands him better than the others, and he responds to her with physical caresses. The Gospel of Philip refers to Mary as Jesus' "spouse," and says "Jesus loved Mary more than the other disciples and kissed her many times on the mouth" (55). Phipps again misinterprets this to mean that the Gospel of Philip believes that Jesus and Mary were married "in the normal Jewish tradition." But the Gnostic communities, represented by this gospel,

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believed in a nuptial union of their members that reconciled the spiritual division of maleness and femaleness, but in some way that was a sublimation of it outside or beyond marriage. The love relationship of Mary and Jesus is probably intended to make them a model of this Gnostic "sacrament of the bridal chamber."

The scandal attaching to these Gnostic ideas clearly indicates that they espoused some kind of love relations that were not, in fact, marriage as conventionally understood. It is hard to know exactly what the Gnostics were doing—whether they understood this nuptial union as a sublimated platonic love, or actually practiced a sexual union that was not intended to be procreative. But the scandal created by Gnostic experimentation with new models of male-female relations, using the relationship of Jesus and the Magdalene as the model, is probably part of the reason for the mainstream church's suppression of any authority attached to Mary Magdalene. She comes to be portrayed as a repentant sinner, weeping at his feet, instead of a close friend and disciple, accustomed to embracing him, and to whom he entrusted the mission of the Gospel to the other disciples.

The orthodox tradition portrays Jesus as having another special disciple, who is called the "beloved disciple," and with whom Jesus had a special relation of love that included physical touching. This is the disciple John, who is repeatedly referred to as the one who laid his head on Jesus' breast (John 13:23-25). Christian iconography has continued this tradition by depicting the Last Supper with John seated next to Jesus, leaning his head on his breast.

Surely no idea is more disturbing to most Christians than the suggestion that Jesus might have been homosexual (or, if we take the Magdalene tradition into account, bisexual!). But there is much in the model of Jesus in the New Testament and later tradition which makes him decidedly a male who was, if not unmasculine, at least iconoclastic toward male models of power and authority. Recent Christian tradition, especially pietist Christianity, has had a tendency to depict Jesus as having feminine, rather than masculine, attributes. He is seen as gentle, peace-loving, nurturing, rather than judgmental. The feminine Jesus has its social roots in a domesticated Christianity which is identified primarily with the home and women, rather than the male public sphere of war and politics. A society that identifies religion and the clergy with feminine attributes and, at the same time, severely taboos feminine attributes for males and projects this taboo toward the feminine upon male homosexuals, clearly is in trouble with its religious model. It is no surprise that the secret dread of middle-class Christianity, specifically Protestant, but in a somewhat different way Catholic also, is clerical homosexuality.

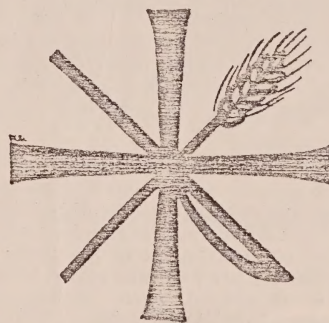
The Feminized Jesus

It would be a mistake to project this model of the feminine Jesus back upon the synoptic picture. It is largely a creation of false sex stereotyping of males and females, in terms of opposite psychological

attributes. The false stereotyping of male homosexuals as "effeminate" is also a part of this anti-female, homophobic sexual pathology. The striking fact about the Synoptics is the lack of such sex stereotyping. Jesus can be harsh, angry, judgmental and even violent in his condemnation of oppressive power. Jesus is not so much "feminine" or "masculine" as he is a figure that defies all such sex stereotyping. Although authoritative, he is authoritative in an iconoclastic way. "He speaks with authority, not as the scribes and the Pharisees." His is an authority that overthrows conventional models of patriarchal, hierarchal, religious and political power systems: that champions women, the poor, the unwashed and outcasts, that rejects the power games of the male leadership classes.

Included in this iconoclasm through conventional male power relations, Jesus specifically disassociated the church from the family. Since later New Testament and Christian tradition closely identified the church and the family (specifically the patriarchal family), following the Jewish tradition, this tension between the church and the family is all the more notable in the Synoptics. The church is seen as a voluntary community of adult men and women who are called out of their normal social contexts, including their families, by discipleship to Jesus.

Discipleship takes place at the crisis point of history, where people must be ready to abandon their conventional concerns for security and family ties for a community of radical obedience. Repeatedly it is said that discipleship to Christ will set parent against child, child against parent, brother against brother. Those who would follow Jesus must be prepared to set aside family ties. This has nothing to do with celibacy. There is no suggestion that people should not have



been married or have children, but that these ties might have to be set aside for the more important loyalty to Christ. The emphasis is on the church as a community of crisis, not a settled, withdrawn society of monks. The setting aside of family ties in the Synoptics is more like the sort of thing that happened during the civil rights movement, when parents and children fell into conflict and were estranged over what was right, and wives left husbands and children to go down into the march, perhaps even to risk death.

This community, drawn together out of recognition of the crisis of the times and discipleship to Jesus, is a

new kind of community. The conventional family and societal models of domination and subordination no longer apply. All are drawn together as persons outside of their social contexts, each responding to the call. In one dramatic passage the family of Jesus is contrasted with the new relations of his followers and supporters. The mother and brothers of Jesus come to persuade him to come home. Jesus replies by saying, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers and sisters?" And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and brothers and sisters" (Matt. 12:48; Mark 3:34; Luke 8:21).

In the Synoptics, although Jesus is not an ascetic, there is no reinforcement of the integration of the church and the family. On the contrary, the two stand in tension with each other. Those who come into the church gather into a new community outside of the married and family patterns of society.

Where does all this leave us, as far as deriving norms of sexuality from the example of Jesus? Basically what it suggests to me is that there is not one normative pattern of sexuality to be drawn from the example of Jesus. Jesus was not an ascetic; several of the disciples were apparently married and there is not the slightest suggestion that the leadership of the church was intended to be a celibate elite. On the other hand, one cannot sanctify the married pattern as the normative pattern for the church and its leadership from Jesus' life either. In many ways the very concept of the church of the Synoptics is that of a fellowship of equals, a community of risk, that is not integrated into the married patterns of society. Jesus' life shows close special friendships with both men and women that included physical tenderness. On the other hand, there is nothing to suggest how sexual these relationships were. In contrast to the later tradition and its obsession with sexual purity, the Synoptic tradition is not particularly interested in the question of sexuality. It is not the avenue of self-realization. Neither is it the biggest sin in the world. Much bigger and more important sins, like legalistic hypocrisy, bar people from the Gospel.

Jesus as Friend

It is precisely in this intermediate space, between the various options we have discussed in this essay, that I would find the most appropriate message of the Gospel on sexuality. Jesus' life gives no exclusive sanctification to a particular sexual life style, whether celibate or married, hetero- or homosexual, as the normative model for Christians. On the other hand, there are aspects that are open to all of these options. None of these options is enshrined. None is ruled out as irretrievably contrary to the Gospel. Most of all, the Synoptic world is not a world obsessed with sexuality, either as the darkest sin or as the path of fulfillment.

If there is anything at all to be said about the sexuality of Jesus it is that it was a sexuality under the control of friendship. He could love both John and Mary Magdalene, physically embrace and be embraced by them, because first of all he knew them as friends, not as sexual objects. Even his disciples finally he wishes to know no longer as disciples, but as friends. If our models of sexuality are disruptive and

frightening, it is primarily because they are not friendships, but are explosive reductions to sexual objectification. Jesus, on the other hand, appears to be a person unperturbed by sexuality because he relates to both men and women first of all as friends. In a church racked by fears of sexuality, its own and that of other people, this is indeed the message that we most need to hear from the life of Jesus: a person who sets up no sexual life style as superior or normative for the ministry or the church, either marriage or celibacy, hetero- or homosexuality; a person who can be intimate and tender with men and women, but most of all a person freed from obsession with the sexual as sexual, because his relationships were controlled not by sexuality, but by friendship. □

Letter From Richmond Jail

FRIENDS:

On April 28, Judge Oren Lewis of the Federal District Court, Alexandria, Va., sentenced Esther Cassidy, Ladon Sheats, John Schuchardt and myself to one year in prison, with six months suspended, followed by two years' probation. We joined in prison Ed Clark, with a similar sentence, and Carl Kabat, O.M.I., serving one year. All six of us are from the Jonah House Community in Baltimore.

Lewis forbade a statement at sentencing, gave us excessive sentences despite concurrent dropping of charges for exactly similar offenses in his and other Federal courts and disregarded Esther Cassidy's pregnancy of three months, her recovery from a serious Easter Sunday auto accident and her first-offense status.

The witness leading to imprisonment went this way: We first shared a litany of repentance—asking God's forgiveness for the main elements of American war-making, beginning with the Manhattan Project, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and ending with the new doomsday weapons systems—Trident, cruise missile, Missile X.

We poured blood on the pillars and floors of the Pentagon, revealing its bloodletting covering three decades. And we scattered ashes, as a symbol of mourning and repentance, and as a warning against a world in nuclear ash.

At Catonsville we said that the genocide stops here. Now we say that the preparations for mass suicide stop here. (To prepare for mass suicide is to be guilty of it.) We will not pay for the conspiracies and mass destruction weapons of this or any government. We will not contribute our silence. Rather, we will testify against official waste and madness, simply because the price of complicity is unconscionably exorbitant. If physical freedom is bought only by complicity, then we will discard complicity by breaking the law.

The court sentenced us purely because we broke the law, and offered to withdraw sentence if we promised to honor the law. But in our view, the law clearly

Session	Topic	Reading
1.	Introduction	a. "Who Are the Deacons" b. Nancy Wilson
2.	Personal Qualifications	a. MCC Bylaws b. Biblical Qualifications c. "Plaster Saint" Merton
3.	MCC Statements of Faith Christianity	a. MCC Bylaws b. Nancy Wilson c. Vocab. of Faith
5.	Deacon's Role in a. Redemption	a. b.
6.	b. Liberation	a. MCC TF on Joel Lang b. Letty Russell c. Hermeneutic Circle d. Gospel in Salt Lake ^{Second} name
7.	c. Compassion	a. "Compassion"
8.	Homosexuality & the Church	a. Embodiment b. Michael England c. "Gravely Gay"
9.	The Deacon in Counseling a. Relationships	a. Why Am I Afraid to See you who I Am b. Open Marriage

1. The House of Commons
a. The House of Commons is the lower house of the British Parliament.
b. It is composed of Members of Parliament (MPs) who are elected by the British people.
c. The House of Commons has the right to initiate and pass legislation, subject to the approval of the House of Lords.
d. The House of Commons also has the right to scrutinize the actions of the government.
e. The House of Commons is the largest and most powerful of the three branches of the British government.

2. The House of Lords
a. The House of Lords is the upper house of the British Parliament.
b. It is composed of members who are appointed by the monarch on the advice of the Prime Minister.
c. The House of Lords has the right to initiate and pass legislation, subject to the approval of the House of Commons.
d. The House of Lords also has the right to scrutinize the actions of the government.
e. The House of Lords is the smallest and least powerful of the three branches of the British government.

3. The Monarch
a. The Monarch is the head of state of the United Kingdom.
b. The Monarch is a member of the House of Lords.
c. The Monarch has the right to appoint and dismiss members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.
d. The Monarch also has the right to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister and other members of the government.
e. The Monarch is the symbol of national unity and continuity.

9. Deacon / Counseling
b. Illness

1. Anatomy of an Illness
2. AIDS

10. Deacon in Counseling
c. Crisis

1. When bad Things Happen...
2. Ass. Handouts

11. Deacon in Counseling
d. Suicide

1.
2.

12. Deacon in Counseling
e. Death + Dying

1. Keubler-Ross
2. Denial of death

13. Deacon in Counseling
f. Spiritual Growth

1. Soul Friend

14. Prayer

1. Cow. Prayer
2. Musical / Spiritual Bear

15. Worship

1. Season of Christian Year
2. Martin Marty

1. *Therapsid* *Canis*
2. *Canis*

1. *Therapsid* *Canis*
2. *Canis*

1. *Therapsid* *Canis*
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2. *Canis*

1. *Therapsid* *Canis*
2. *Canis*

COMMISSION ON WOMEN IN MINISTRY

How It All Began

A dream, a concern, a commitment and certainly enthusiasm for the cause of women in professional (i.e., salaried) church leadership - all were characteristics of the person who came to the Division of Education and Ministry seeking a place where her dream could become a reality.

In the spring of 1973, Linda Brebner (UPCUSA) brought to Emily Gibbes (Associate General Secretary, Division of Education and Ministry, NCC) and Burnice Fjellman (Associate Executive, Professional Church Leadership, Division of Education and Ministry, NCC) a proposal for a "Center for the Development of Creative Ministries for Women." In a covering memo Linda wrote, "Hopefully this will materialize into a real aid to women as they attempt to find employment in the Church."

"The proposal is for the creation of the Center for the Development of Creative Ministries for Women, which will be an interdenominational attempt to find and/or create dynamic ministries for professional women in the Church" - so reads the first draft of the proposal. Other features of the proposal included an emphasis on initial placement and mobility of women, being inclusive of both lay and ordained professionals, the unique needs/ talents of women, new models of ministry and renewal of traditional models, the Center as a resource channel for employment information - all toward the hoped for outcome of changed attitudes (and practices) regarding the employment of women.

Subsequently, an Advisory Committee, including men and women representing denominations and church-related agencies, met several times to consider the proposal and its possible implementation. It is interesting to note that the twenty-two persons invited to be a part of the Advisory Committee included several who are presently active members of COWIM: Linda Brebner, Emma Justes, Mary Cline Detrick, Beth Marcus, Valerie Russell, Emily Gibbes and Burnice Fjellman. Others are on the FYI section of the present COWIM mailing list and thus are kept informed.

The Advisory Committee at a meeting in September 1973, carefully critiqued the proposal and raised a number of questions as it sought to define next steps. "The key question became 'How can a group of concerned people help personnel staff in the denominations on the issue of employment of women in the Church?'" Out of the discussion came the decision to "Hold a consultation on December 4 and 5 (1973) with individuals from denominations who are related to (the stated) concerns for the purpose of:

- "a. obtaining as broad an understanding as possible of the situation of women employed by the church.
- "b. ascertaining what are the needs, issues and concerns the Advisory Committee needs to address.
- "c. exploring how to change the structures as they now exist and the attitudes toward women so the denominations can help women find employment which is satisfying and meaningful."

Two assumptions were identified as rationale for calling the Consultation:

- "1. The absence of women in professional positions in the church.
- "2. Increase in the number of women preparing for the ministry."

In anticipation of the Consultation, the Committee stressed that there are three groups of church employed women to be considered: ordained professional women, lay professional women and support staff women.

The Consultation on Women in Ministry

For two days (December 6-7, 1973) 34 women and men engaged in a tense and purposeful consideration of the obstacles and hindrances to the recruitment and placement of women in church positions. (Invitations to the Consultation had gone out to approximately 100 persons.) Sixteen of the 34 persons present became part of COWIM, some of whom are still active.

More than a dozen issues surfaced in the two-day meeting, including: creating awareness among the churches, inequities in the recruitment and hiring procedures (e.g., downgrading women's previous work experience, especially voluntary, as preparation for a salaried position in the church), need to humanize the hierarchical system to make it more just for all as well as to change the system, raise consciences of people in local parishes, life style concerns, need for a communication network among women in ministry, concern for support staff.

Out of the discussion came the recommendation "That a commission be established related to the program unit on Professional Church Leadership, Division of Education and Ministry, NCCCUSA".

Further it was recommended that the "commission should include significant persons from personnel offices, seminaries, feminists, the third world. . .members will come from across the denominational spectrum. . .Denominational representation should also include lay professional women, seminarians, organists, secretaries. . ."

"The Consultation ended on a note of excitement and anticipation. . ."

Transition

An ad hoc committee (volunteered during the Consultation) met a number of times to refine and to seek ways to implement the recommendations. This committee also met with representatives of Professional Church Leadership to develop a report and proposal to present to the PCL Program Committee. On May 3, 1974 the Program Committee received the report and approved "the establishment of a Commission on Women in Ministry." As presented to the PCL Program Committee, the purpose of the new Commission was defined as follows:

- "A. To raise the consciousness of people at all levels of the denominations' life concerning their continuing discrimination against women in their employment practices.
- "B. To facilitate fair employment of women at all levels of the denominations' organizations covering the following areas:
 - 1. equal opportunity
 - 2. salaries
 - 3. benefits
 - 4. on-the-job training
 - 5. continuing education
- "C. To create/identify/coordinate workable strategies and programs concerning women employed by denominations to coordinate denominational personnel services in behalf of women employed by churches.
- "D. To provide a forum to share and discuss the concerns of women in ministry including both formal meetings and informal communications.
- "E. To stimulate and coordinate action-research, e.g., reformulation of the concept of ministry.
- "F. To encourage and coordinate the development of support among women employed by denominations with particular attention to advocacy and grievance.

- "G. To discover ways of humanizing 'the system' and work situations of all people.
- "H. To find ways to evaluate effectively the various kinds of work experience, including volunteer, that women have had which would qualify them for professional ministry, and making appropriate recommendations to denominations.
- "I. To develop and/or give visibility to creative and innovative forms of ministry for women and men."

From May to the middle of September the ad hoc committee met seven times to develop criteria for denominational appointments to the new commission and to plan for the first meeting. An important decision by the ad hoc committee was the selection of Susan Savell as part-time (salaried) consultant, who with Burnice Fjellman of the PCL staff, would staff the Commission. Susan served effectively as consultant through the February 1976 meeting.

The Commission on Women in Ministry

Seventeen months after Linda's first visit to the NCC offices - and following many interim meetings - the first meeting of COWIM was held, September 30-October 2 at the Graymoor Retreat Center, Harrison, New York. It was, as someone said, a "yeasty affair." In planning the meeting, the ad hoc committee stressed the fully participatory nature of the meeting and decided that this first meeting be considered "an expanded 'ad hoc working group' that would work at the following tasks:

- "1. to create strategies to insure the proper number and broad representation and adequate funding from each denomination.
- "2. to work corporately to design the program for a full Commission meeting in January or February of 1975.
- "3. to address issues of immediate concern to those present."

A considerable amount of time was spent hearing from representatives of the various denominations and agencies what the burning issues relative to women were for them. Most women could and did speak out of personal experiences of discrimination and frustration.

From the beginning, COWIM has sought to establish a pattern of decision-making and style of meeting which is open and inclusive and certainly less structured than the traditional business meeting. The first meeting modeled this new style and shared leadership in the various plenaries and decision-making by consensus and affirmation. The setting for the meeting is also important in this regard and for most of the meetings since September 1974 the women and men meet in a large circle facing each other. The plenaries are now usually chaired by the COWIM convenor, but the decision making and the setting continue as described. Other aspects of COWIM as an organization which had their beginnings during the "ad hococracy" and in the first meeting include the following.

Funding. It was the intention that denominations support COWIM through representation at the meetings and financial contributions. There was the hope and the request, through PCL to the denominations, for \$10,000 over and above the annual commitments to PCL. This amount has never been realized; more disappointing was the fact that some denominations simply designated a portion of their contribution to PCL for COWIM rather than giving new money. It was agreed from the first meeting that special projects would have to seek new money from denominations or foundations.

Task Forces. The first meeting began the pattern of working in small groups on specific issues. At the second meeting (February 1975) the entire group (over 60) spent time dreaming and visioning the future work of COWIM. Out of that process 12 or 14 issues surfaced as areas needing attention and of these six were chosen: Ethnic Women in Ministry, Models of Ministry, Women in Seminary, Employment Issues, Women in Leadership and Gay Women in Ministry. Those present selected the task force in which they wanted to work and each group met to choose a convenor and to define objectives. The Commission decided early that major time at one of its two yearly meetings should be given to task forces. Budget did not allow task forces to meet between meetings (unless persons covered their own expenses) so this decision was economical of time and money. It is important to stress that COWIM meetings are work meetings and that there is a commitment to accomplishments. With limited budget and staff, COWIM seriously tries to fulfill its objectives. At present the task forces are (note changes in titles and number): Ethnic Women of Color in Ministry, Employment Issues, Women in Theological Education, Gay Issues and Ministry and Models of Leadership (combination of Models of Ministry and Women in Leadership).

Caucuses/Interest Groups. In addition to task forces, each COWIM meeting includes time for special interest groups or caucuses. These are self-selective and may or may not bring decisions or actions to a plenary.

Organization. Though COWIM is a flexible and open organization a need was expressed early in its life for an "organization statement" to include statements about its purpose, membership, task forces, steering committee, etc. It can truly be said the document is always "becoming", but many hope the latest statement (adopted March 1978) will not be modified for a long time. Understandably, a number of people have been frustrated at the frequency and length of time spent revising and amending the document though such times may be a safeguard against becoming locked into any given pattern.

It was determined at the first meeting that COWIM should meet twice each year; that the spring meeting should be the "annual" meeting (elections, organizational matters, budget, etc.) and that major time at the fall meeting should be given to task forces. As it has developed, however, approximately five hours at each meeting is scheduled for task forces. The task forces are reviewed at the spring meeting as to effectiveness and whether or not any should be discontinued. So far the only change has been the merger of two of them as noted in the section "Task Forces". Internally, task forces have modified their statements of purpose and objectives.

Steering Committee. Shared leadership was strongly affirmed by the ad hoc committee prior to the first meeting of COWIM. One of the ways this was and is expressed is through the Steering Committee which is made up of all task force convenors, the COWIM convenor and three members-at-large to balance the ethnic composition. The Steering Committee meets once or twice between meetings of the Commission as well as during the COWIM meetings. All meetings, but particularly those held during COWIM meetings, are open to any COWIM participant.

Ethnic Minority Women of Color. Another strong affirmation during the planning for COWIM was the importance of involving ethnic minority women of color. A membership goal of fifty percent ethnic minority women was established. While this goal has never been realized, it is a goal which COWIM feels must be retained and worked toward. Presently there are 29 ethnic persons of color on the mailing list of 100 which is obviously not 50% and unfortunately a very small number of the 29 participate in COWIM. Much work needs to be done in this area.

Attendance. Fifty-six persons attended the first meeting and 66 the second meeting of COWIM. At the third meeting out of 57 present, 22 were there for the first time. Since then there have been no more than nine new persons at any meeting and attendance has been between 45 and 50 persons. Twenty-one of those persons who attended the first meeting are still ac-

tive and 33 persons now active in COWIM have attended four or more meetings. Participation is almost entirely by denominational representatives, though COWIM reserves the right to appoint members (no more than 20% of total) because of their particular expertise or to increase participation of ethnic minority persons of color.

Consciousness Raising. CR has been an important ingredient in COWIM meetings since October 1975. From one and one-half to four hours at each meeting is given to CR on issues such as racism, gay issues, personal histories of ministry, women and power and women in theological education.

What is COWIM Doing?

COWIM takes seriously its role as an "ecumenical advocate, support and empowerment group for lay and ordained women who are in professional church leadership or who are preparing for such positions. . . ." (Organization Statement)

Some of the ways in which COWIM carries out its purpose are:

As Advocate

- endorsed Proposal for a Research Program on Black Women in the Ministry" - in Boston area (September-October 1974)
- supported, through letters, the 11 Episcopal women ordained in July 1974 and the four Bishops who ordained them (September-October 1974); wrote to Episcopal women and the Presiding Bishop concerning the ordination of women (February 1976); sent a letter to the Presiding Bishop expressing joy at the action by the Episcopal Church allowing the ordination of women (October 1976).
- wrote letters on behalf of women and minorities on the national staff of the UPCUSA who were terminated (September-October 1974).
- sent letters to the General Secretary and the President of the General Synod, Reformed Church in America, in support of affirmative actions concerning women in the Church (September-October 1974).

- sent a telegram to the ORDINATION NOW Conference (Roman Catholic) communicating our support and prayers (October 1975).
- sent letters to denominations urging them to upgrade lay professional positions. . . (October 1976).
- by means of a letter to the PCUS expressed concern for a COWIM representative who is not funded (October 1977).
- sent a "Declaration of Faith" to the National Women's Conference in Houston, Texas (October 1977).
- affirmed the dedicated work of the UPCUSA Task Force on the Ordination of Homosexuals and expressed COWIM's support that ordination be open to all persons without regard for sexual or affectional preference (March 1978).

As Publisher

- A Resource Guide for Women in Seminary (1976). Revision currently under consideration.
- A Resource Packet on Gay Issues and Ministry (1976). Revised edition 1978.
- Promotional Leaflet (1977).
- Resource Packet on Employment Issues, to include theological understandings, economic equality, career opportunities, life style choices - authorized March 1978.

As Sponsor

- Women in Ministry Week (annually since 1976).
- Forum on Sexism in the Bible, December 1977.
- Interdenominational Women's Employment Conference, February 1978.
- Consultation of Ethnic Minority Women in Ministry, April 20-23, 1978.

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As Co-Sponsor

- Seminary Quarter at Grailville (annually since 1977).
- Women's Interseminary Conference (annually since 1977).
- Two services of celebration for women in ministry: October 1974, in support of 11 Episcopal women priests; June 1978 in support of women in the Reformed Church in American seeking ordination.

There can be no concluding statement or "wrap-up" because COWIM is becoming. There is yet much to be done and chapters to be written. The "excitement and anticipation" felt at the conclusion of the Consultation in 1973 are still evident in COWIM meetings.

Burnice Fjellman
July 1978

Leah Carey \$1.00

women

vol.3 no.2 **A Journal of Liberation**



BUILDING A
NEW CULTURE

BUILDING A NEW CULTURE

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For Your Information inside back cover

Front Cover: Tracy Stern

Back Cover: midnite special, poem by Ann Julia McLean

Special Thanks to: Anita Kilduff, Linda Shopes, Sue Spellman, Jean Turner

Staff: Margaret Blanchard, Jo Ann Fuchs, Sylvia Gillett, Donna Keck, Claudia Leight, Suzanne Muehlenkamp, Angela Murphy, Audrey Nelliechild, Jane Sellman, Joan Stanne, Suzy Stein, Tracy Stern, Ellen Sugg, Karen Whitman

Published by Women: A Journal of Liberation, Inc. Distributed by Eastern News, 155 W. 15th St., New York City, 10011. Subscription rates: \$4/4 issues; Canada, \$5; Overseas, \$6. All institutions, \$10. Single issues are \$1 to individuals and \$2.50 to institutions. Address all correspondence to: Women: A Journal of Liberation, 3028 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21218. Phone (301) 366-6475. Copyright © 1972 by Women: A Journal of Liberation, Inc. This publication is on file at the International Women's History Archive, 2325 Oak Street, Berkeley, Ca. 94708, and is available on microfilm through Bell & Howell, Drawer "E", Wooster, Ohio.

Editorial

Culture is a society's set of social and esthetic values, and expressions of these values embodied in a group identity.

The Dominant Culture

In the dominant culture, the importance of women as a group goes unrecognized. We are identified primarily by the roles we play or by the men we associate with. Although we have crucial jobs, as housewives for example, they are socially unrewarded ones. The status of many jobs is, in fact, determined by the sex which fills them.

Our position in the dominant culture is not accidental. The dominant culture is supported by the mechanism that created it: capitalist economy. Just as it is economically necessary under capitalism to exploit labor, it is also important to maintain a hierarchical culture which establishes unequal relations between men and women.

If men and women were viewed as equals by this culture, then women could no longer be used as a source of cheap labor, or as threats to men's jobs. There would no longer be justification for the notion that "a woman's place is in the home." For men, "macho" fantasies could no longer be a source of power. If capitalism were not complimented by a sexist and racist culture, ordinary men would have to deal with the reality of their own powerlessness, alienation and exploitation.

Our position as second-class citizens in this culture presents us with two options: we can internalize our inferior status, acting out the roles assigned to us, substituting emotionality for action, self-sacrifice for initiative, neurosis for anger; or, we can recognize our common bond of oppression and our collective potential for liberation. Only out of that liberation can we choose our own values, rejecting or accepting those already assigned to us.

Feminist Culture

Women are beginning to pick up the pieces. The women's movement has provided a vehicle for self-realization and a growing collective consciousness, out of which we can form a new culture, a feminist culture, with goals that ultimately stand in opposition to the goals of capitalism. In forming this new culture, we stress collectivity instead of individualism and competition. In practice, this means sharing leadership, encouraging more quiet or less confident sisters to contribute. It means maintaining consciousness-

raising and criticism-self-criticism sessions as regular parts of a well-functioning group.

Building a new culture is a challenging process. We are digging up our lost history so that our new identity has roots. As we develop new forms of creativity, we are learning how to appreciate the importance of traditional women's functions such as child-rearing and handicrafts. And, we are exploring formerly "male-dominated" fields such as rock, carpentry, and film-making as ways to express our new ideas and values.

The values of the feminist culture--self-identity and collectivity--can play a vital role in organizing more and more women into our movement. Initially, our concern should be to find issues which meet the needs of women, whether at the work place or in the community. But this is not enough. Women must grasp a sense of their power to change their own lives. A strike or a campaign for day care, for instance, is only partially successful when it satisfies immediate, concrete demands. It falls short if that achievement is not interpreted by each person as a victory on account of her own participation. This identification with the collective struggle is essential if women hope to change existing conditions. These cultural values are not merely an appendage of our movement; they are a driving force in the process of change.

The Future

We view the culture of the current women's movement to be valuable as a transitional step in the larger process of human liberation. We do not support the evolution of a separatist women's culture as an ultimate goal, because we do not believe women can change society by trying to create a women's culture within or alongside the dominant culture. We realize that a redefinition of the values of the entire population can come about only through political and economic change.

Cooperation, collectivity, the dignity of all human life, respect for the talents and expressions of all women, men and children must be highly valued in our new culture. Role expectation must be independent of sex, race or class. In the creation of such a culturally homogeneous environment, the sense of solidarity which we feel with other women because of our common cultural oppression will make way for an identity with all people on the basis of our common human condition.■

Developing A

Revolutionary Women's Culture

Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band

In this paper we want to define first culture, and later Culture, and their roles in making a feminist revolution. People and culture are so bound together that it is hard to separate them.

Because culture and Culture are so difficult to define, we've begun by asking ourselves some questions. For instance, is everything anybody does in order to live culture? Is transportation culture? No, but bars and horse and buggies are. Is eating culture? No, but steak vs. hamburger is. That people do things is not, in itself, culture. But the manner in which these things are done is culture.

Culture must refer not only to what we do, but also to how we do it. And why we do what we do. And how we feel about doing what we do.

But then, what isn't culture? Power is not culture. But the unequal relations of power and the myths which propagate these relations are culture. The means of production are not culture. But control of the means and the rationales for that control is. These myths and rationales in turn are the seeds for self-fulfilling prophecies. ("Well, I'm just a stupid woman--what do you expect of me?")

Culture, then, is the way we do what we do; it establishes norms, it is defining, it creates expectations and controls values. Culture gives us our ideas of human propriety and human possibility; it outlines these possibilities and defines limits on the conduct of its members.

Since as feminists we want to change the world, we have to know answers to some fairly critical questions. Will culture change when only the "objective conditions," the material basis of our existence changes?



Some things will change, some things won't. We know this from the example of "socialist" countries, such as the Soviet Union. In some of these countries, all that has changed is the means of production. In any case, we wouldn't want to wait around for the material conditions to change, assuming that thereby we shall have a just and generous society.

Let's ask an even more interesting question: will objective conditions change without a change in culture? Will the poor rise up, the working class seize control of production, women overturn the patriarchy without a change in culture? No, change will not occur if we just explain why things are the way they are. We also need a vision of an alternative, another way of living.

We maintain that, at least in a society like ours, defining an alternative, feminist, socialist vision is the Queen pin in the achievement of social change. Without this vision, people in America will not work for change. In addition, the vision must be so powerful, so urgent, so compelling, so immediate, so utterly convincing that women can no longer stand living the way they do. The vision must be explicit and concrete enough so that not only are needs for overturning the patriarchy defined, but also needs for getting that better society are generated.

This business of generation of needs is a tricky concept. It sounds manipulative and sneaky. But what we've got to realize is that needs are generated all the time. One of the functions of culture is to tell us what we need. What we are saying is that we want to build a culture which defines and makes clear needs that are very different from the needs of this culture. We can do this by creating a vision of a society we'd like to live in.

There's another way to think about this. It has long been assumed that the extent to which a revolutionary movement survives, or even flourishes, is the extent to which people perceive that their needs are not being met in the current society. And that this is the fault of the society, not the fault of the people themselves. We think that this last proviso has been what the left has stressed, and correctly.

But the problem with this strategy in our affluent, contradictory, powerful, gimmick-a-minute, media-saturated, loopholes-in-the-system, appearance of freedom, laffriot color TV society is that nobody knows exactly what their needs are. Our current culture confuses us. It tells us that we aren't suffering at all or that this is the way we're supposed to feel. And when that doesn't work, it explains it in terms of needs which do nothing to alter the basic conditions of our lives.

Do we need a color TV? It would be nice. It helps cut the boredom and the tension. Do women need to be beautiful? If we want to be cared for we do. Will women need to be beautiful in another society? We don't know if we never propose the idea that there could be another society.

In short, while we need an explanation which says our suffering is society's fault, we must also supply a vision of an alternate culture. We have to understand the alluring and wonderful aspects of the society in which we live, such as color TV, snowmobiles and dishwashers; we have to understand why some people can get rich and why most people want to. More importantly, we must see women winning and understand what that means because we must provide equally compelling things in our revolutionary culture.

Our visionary society has to include the light show, the big fat day-glo technical world because that world is magic; there's no denying it. We like that world too. That is why we loved rock even before we realized that it was destroying us as women. We must understand and include this magic and use it to our own ends: to create the vision of a society which embodies community, dignity, joy, knowledge, understanding, meaning and love.

Here is where culture with the upper-case "C" comes in. When we realize the leviathan we are fighting, we also realize that words alone are not sufficient to make our alternative vision live. In creating a vision which will be compelling, strong and immediate, we need more than words and more than action, although we need both. We need fantasy and poetry and music and a way to shift time for a little while from the present to the future alternate society. An explicit visionary Culture can provide some of this.

Culture can exist in the realm of "what if." In that realm we can celebrate our victory, although we have not won yet. This provides hope. We can receive strength from that celebration, all the while knowing that we have not won yet. We can generate an atmosphere where women can feel free enough to struggle to be free. We can explore the ways in which our vision is real: the possibilities which are denied to us in our "real life."

And the effort to create this Culture itself is part of the vision. In an altered society, human effort will be directed at creativity, challenge, and social meaning. To the extent that we can create this culture, we are doing some of what we would be doing in the new society. The very act of bringing to life a dream of the future sets in motion the machinery to realize that dream.

Why We Chose Rock as the Vehicle

1. We liked rock and so did millions of others.

There is creativity and music and a sense of joy in all of us. What rock told us, though, was that in order to be able to create its kind of music, you had to be magic, and you had to be male. And everybody accepted that. We accepted that, until the words got through to us, and we realized that we were despised. We were digging the celebrations of our degradation. Partly hype, partly real content. The hype was that this music was the new insurgency, that it was dangerous to the powers that were. (It was dangerous, all right, but dangerous to women, dangerous to audiences, dangerous to the insurgencies that did exist in the sixties.) And the content has to do with the music: the drive and the energy, the electronic sounds, the real technical and human magic that our society is able to create.

We should tell it simply: we chose rock because it is so popular, because we dug it so much. And so did so many other people: every 14-year-old girl listens to rock music. Here was a cultural vehicle of great popularity, power and appeal. Maybe we could use it.

2. Rock had become a male counter-insurgency.

One of the aspects of rock that interested us was that it was so sexist. More sexist than the music of the fifties, where women, incredibly trivialized and romanticized as they were, were still objects of love, not derision. Love went out of rock; aggressive sexuality, rape came in. Why?

We have two tentative thoughts. When rock with its drive and "guts" and rebellion (on some level) against existing structures became a counter-culture, an insurgency, it was o.k. to show true feelings. (Respectability has long been associated with women, for good reason: it was one of our protections. If we were respectable, maybe (Bless Jesus!) we wouldn't get raped.) The emphasis was on (men) daring to be powerful and (women) daring to obey that power. One could therefore give full vent to the hatreds and aggressions respectable people had heretofore sat on. And what was more universal than the hatred of women?

Without self-conscious, self-critical, explicitly visionary and responsible revolutionary culture, any insurgency usually incorporates some of the worst aspects of the culture they are against. Rock was no different.

But even those on the left, those who were trying to be self-conscious, self-critical, explicitly revolutionary, accepted and reveled in rock as a refuge



for sexism. (There are many examples: see, for instance, the Fanshen collective's description of the Sundance Collective and the events preceding the Seattle conspiracy trial.) Why? Because, we maintain, the left was male-controlled, and the left was using its male brotherhood to reach people (males) it thought it otherwise could not reach. In other words, the left wanted to make contact with workers, bikers, "ordinary people," and a good way to do this was through a shared culture. And what they could share in this culture was their privilege over women, their aggression towards women, their hatred of women. So rock was a nice vehicle for "organizing."

Creating Our Visionary Culture Through Rock

Could we build that revolutionary, socialist, feminist, humanist culture we were talking about? Could we build it in rock? How?

The lyrics were in some ways the most obvious place to start. When men were singing about us, the lyrics were mostly vicious. We were the chick in the free fire zone, the mindless, soulless tease for whom no punishment was equal to the crime of independence. The bitch who deserved whatever she got, and more. On the other hand, when women sang about us, they sang about our pain. It was part of the deal: women could participate in making rock if they fit into certain roles: singers only (please, no instruments), sing about pain and be careful to assert that women's

pain is here to stay, that women were born to suffer and always will, because it is the divine order of things.

Women musicians had to belt out the litany: men make us suffer, but there's no possibility that we could exist for anything except men. The more we suffer, the more woman we are. To be heard, women had to take on one of two sexist stereotypes. They could come on as passionate tigress, or they could come on with lamb-like love for everybody except themselves. And always that pain that is supposed to define us as women, that pain because of men.

There's pain, alright, and we're still going to sing about it; we can't dismiss this tradition lightly. If it weren't for women struggling for at least the right to sing about our pain, we probably wouldn't have ever heard about it. We would have been left with the only other scenario available: the bitch, and the celebrations of her downfall.

But we are going to open up other aspects of women's experience: we are also going to sing about how the pain doesn't have to be there; how we fight and struggle and love to make it change. And we have to sing about ourselves from our own experience in all its richness: our strengths and dignity and courage and humor and honor and love and uniqueness and wisdom, our joy as well as our pain, our celebrations as well as our suffering; our lives.

However, to break the sexist order, we have to do more than sing different lyrics. We have to demystify the priesthood of the instrument and the amplifier. We have to be the instrumentalists, too, and the technicians, and move the equipment; set it up, find the fuses, fix the feed, mike, monitor; run it, play it, control it.

And as long as there are high priests (or priestesses), as long as the concept of priesthood remains, rock is still going to be sexist. It is here that we have to change the total experience of rock performance. We have to involve our audiences as equals, include rather than insult them, respect rather than degrade them, play for them rather than at them, acknowledge that our audience is our life, our understanding, our spirit.

It's important for the audience to be real and a part of our performance, so we keep the lights on them. We talk to them. We violate the code that permeates all arts which says that you can't explain what you are doing. "If you play you play. If you talk you talk. If the audience doesn't get it, tough." So we rap a lot to our audiences during the performance, and we do theatre and comedy for them and with them.

We have the audience participate in the creation of the vision by means of singing along with us. We take special care to teach them songs which helps break down the distinction between audience and performer: they perform with us and we're audience with them. We do a true-to-life representation of Maxwell Mucho Macho and his Flaming Groins doing

a classic oppressive rock number. The audience picks up on what role they play, and they yell and they pant and they scream, and grab onto Maxwell's legs and sweat a lot. It's at this point that audience and performers become aware of their ability to destroy the priesthood together.

And we even tell the audience what's hard for us and what's easy for us and why. (Note that sexism says you gotta be cool, and never acknowledge when you're doing something better than you expected, because people might catch on that you're not that great all the time.)

A harder thing to explain, but something we rely on extensively, is humor. There are all different kinds of humor, but the important one for us is a humor which breaks structure or form, and by doing so, questions it. So if we not only talk to each other and an audience during a performance, but also laugh and tell jokes and parody the forms we're using, we are getting across a very important message: that these forms are not divine, that we control these forms, and we can go in and out of them, that they are open to ridicule, and therefore, question.

We think of this use of humor as an anti-authoritarian vehicle, and as an assertion of strength. We're not intimidated by the forms because they, as everything else, are human creations, and we can play with them. We can use them when necessary, discard them when they are destructive or unnecessary.

A serious musician doesn't smile. Why not?

Changing the lyrics, controlling the equipment, making low the mighty--these are obvious (although difficult) tasks of a feminist, humanitarian music. Divesting rock of its sexism, however, leads to a slightly startling development: apparently, one can't simply make nice, clean, revolutionary rock without the rock itself--the musical form--changing. Take away the "totalitarian charisma," the priests, and the power and the glory and the sultans and the elephants and the 10¹⁰ decibels, and you find that "pure" rock can get a little boring. Rock is still fun music --it's got drive, power and energy--but when the stud and strut are gone, there's room for other things to come in. Maybe the quality of that energy which so characterizes rock is modified when it is used to create and celebrate that creation rather than as an insistent repetitive power trip to keep the audience awed, obedient, and flat on its back.

A Last Word: Culture Isn't Everything, but Neither is Anything Else

We need more than culture; we need power. We have maintained that a visionary culture will move us toward taking power. But we do want to examine the potential traps of a visionary culture: namely, if our vision becomes too compelling, it may appear that we have, in fact, won. If one starts living in a fantasy world, needs are not only created but filled there. That would shift us from a revolutionary culture to a messianic culture, and we don't want that.

When we think about this business of culture, escapism, celebration, and our need for power, an

example comes to mind. When we played for a group of women at Cornell University, the band and the audience created a vibrant euphoric celebration (helped along by the fact that the New Haven WLRB was there, too). The men were first asked to leave the dance and then bodily thrown out, and the thrill at this small, initial victory was so intense that the women believed they had won the war. This feeling of total victory continued despite the fact that reality in the form of angry, drunk, belligerent, and potentially damaging fraternity men were literally banging on the door.

A small messianic culture had, in fact, been created, and the women thought that was all they needed. They didn't realize that their power did not extend beyond the doors of our small, women-created environment. (Cornell is unique in all our experiences. Other dances have incorporated the reality of men present which tends to inhibit total flights of fantasy.)

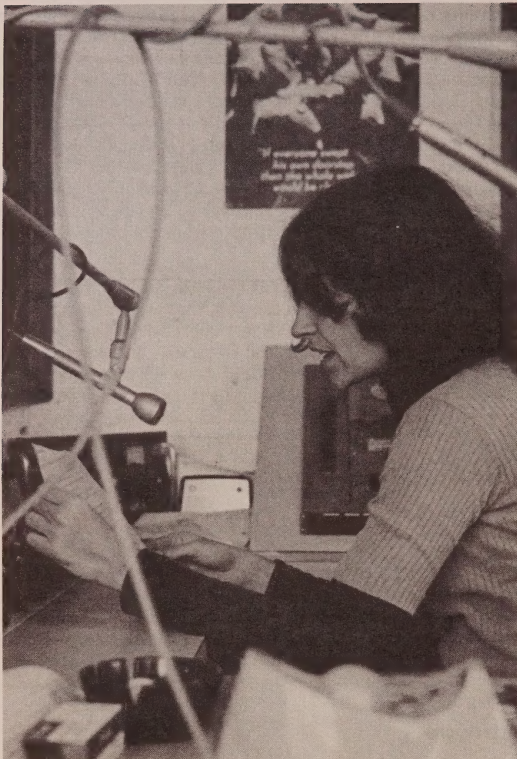
And a last, last word: culture cannot operate in a vacuum. We need a movement behind us, because power is real. We are simply interpreting, explaining, the relations of power, showing how they could be changed, providing a glimpse of changed power. But we have to go back out in that society and fight to change them; our glimpse of changed power is only what we have maintained at the beginning: a what if, a fantasy, a poetry. It is to show us where to fight and what to fight for; it will not, in itself, be able to carry on the campaigns or skirmishes in that battle, or win it.

Afterword

The ideas in this paper have been developing through three years of experience. However, we have only begun setting them down in a formal way with an initial paper written for the Chicago Women's Liberation Union Conference. This paper is a second draft of that earlier one and is still quite rough, for which we apologize. We wish to stress that these ideas are a result of the collective effort of the CWLRB: Susan Abod, Sherry Jenkins, Linda Mitchell, Suzanne Prescott, Naomi Weissstein, Pat Miller (and friend Ellen DuBois). This draft, however, was prepared primarily by Naomi Weissstein and Pat Miller ■



Elenore Pred, Miami, Fla.



Using the Airwaves to Speak to Women

Chris Carroll, Durham, N.C.

Women have rarely had a chance to use broadcasting to speak honestly with each other. In Durham, women have been working in radio for a year and a half in an attempt to speak to our sisters and to gain some control over the images of women transmitted over the air. In a small collective (eight women), we have been teaching and supporting each other in learning new skills, sharing program ideas, and using our collective strength to try to change policy and communicate to the male majority in WDBS-FM, a local rock music station.

Several factors, including formal, crony-type recruitment policies, an atmosphere of male camaraderie, and the importance of technical knowledge at the station, combined to make women staff exceptional, although not altogether absent, at WDBS. The station has traditionally had strong input from the Engineering School at Duke, which until last year did not even admit women as freshmen. Women who did become staff members were often introduced to radio by having a boyfriend working at the station!

Women's programming began on WDBS in the spring of 1971, when two women involved in the Durham women's movement began producing short features called Women's News. The program has since changed its name to Women's Voices and now consists of two minutes worth of reporting and commentary, heard three times daily Monday through Friday. Culled from women's publications, national magazines, and material from the UPI teletype, the broadcasts have reported developments on such movement fronts as child-care, abortion, and equal employment, recounted the accomplishments of women active in the community and the nation, and commented on cultural issues such as sex role socialization. We have also used the broadcasts to air personal accounts of discrimination, women's poetry, excerpts from interviews with women, and reports on events in the local women's movement.

In the fall of 1971, when more women became interested in the project, the collective started The Women's Show, now aired from 3 pm to 5:30 every Sunday. The show consists of music by women artists and of features -- interviews, dramatizations, and reports -- produced by the collective. Producing these features and learning to engineer our show have been our main technical challenges.

At first it seemed ideal to have each woman in the collective take a turn being disc jockey on successive Sundays. It was, and is, important to us that every woman have a chance to learn new skills. The result of this rotation, however, was that no one got enough practice on the air to become really skilled and confident, and the show had little personality, many technical errors, and unimaginative music programming.

When criticism from the station program director made this clear to us, we decided to have just two women to engineer the show and plan the music. This arrangement has worked out well, and the two women have worked closely together in exchanging criticism and ideas which can make the program more interesting and more relevant to the community. We have branched out in our music selection, made an effort to find out about and announce symposia and speakers

especially of interest to women, and given publicity to services for women such as birth control information and assault counseling. Other women in the collective contribute to the show by reviewing records and producing 15-30 minute feature programs.

Features for the show have been shaped by our personal interests and by the resources we have available in Durham. We have taped interviews with women active in local politics, a woman directing in the theater, a Durham woman who visited North Vietnam, and a woman involved in researching women's history. We have also used material from women's publications to produce programs on Angela Davis and Emma Goldman, on childcare organizing in Chicago, on romance and sexuality, and on the history of women's employment. A recent program was a conversation between two women talking about what they liked about themselves and each other. We hope these features relate to women at many stages in the movement and we try to address both the challenge of gaining political power for women and other oppressed groups, and the struggle of finding personal freedom and identity.

We see the musical programming of the show as contributing to the positive and active image of women in the same way as the features. Planning a show of all women's music from the record library of a "progressive rock" station certainly gives evidence of sexism in rock music! Not only are songs about women's experience and perspective absent, women artists and groups form a tiny minority among the available music. Over the years of its existence, WDBS has acquired most of the albums put out by even mediocre, little-known rock groups, but failed to hang onto even one album from such female artists as Etta James, the Pennywhistlers, or Loretta Lynn.

While most of the music on our show is that of women rock and popular performers, we have also tried to emphasize the importance of women artists in blues, country, and folk traditions. In these traditions, women's experience and feelings seem to have been allowed the most freedom of expression. Loretta Lynn's songs talk about the pain of being a woman in a way which strikes a responsive chord in us even as we realize that she presents no real alternatives for living. Women's blues and folk songs also often contain meaningful references to such events in women's lives as pregnancy, desertion, and housework, as well as reflecting working class and poor people's experience.

Women within rock do not seem to have developed music which reflects on these experiences of women or which expresses a sense of self-identity too strong to be submerged in romance, perhaps because these values have not seemed socially acceptable or profitable to promoters and record companies. Female composers such as Carole King and Laura Nyro stick to traditional themes and values--finding your life's meaning in a man, losing your life's meaning when you lose a man, rearranging your life to suit a man. Still we play their music because they are talented women who in their careers--if not their lyrics--display commitment and self-expression. We hope

that shows like ours can help create a larger audience for female artists and groups who express women's strength and commitment to struggling for freedom in their lyrics.

With Women's Voices on the air five days a week and the Women's Show on every Sunday, the collective has had a fairly large impact on WDBS programming. Our effects on the personnel of the station and on the rest of broadcasting time have been less great. Most of us in the collective are more committed to women's liberation than to work in radio; this has decreased our influence in the station. Because we have concentrated exclusively on women's programming, we have not channeled many women into other aspects of radio. A more formalized training program has since increased the number of women working at the station. The collective has pressed the station management to see that women's music is played more frequently throughout the day and to halt the use of belittling and insulting stereotypes of women in station advertising.



Marilyn Roaf, Durham, N.C.

Broadcasting programs which women can see as relating to their interests and their lives is something we all enjoy doing. We hope it puts women without the time or financial ability to join a women's group in touch with the movement, and that it encourages and informs women who are just becoming interested in women's liberation. We think that the reporting we do about what women are doing in other places encourages Durham women working in the movement. (Several women we know plan Sunday afternoons to be near a radio.) For those of us in the collective, learning the technical and journalistic skills to be able to produce radio tapes and act as a disk jockey has been an outlet for creativity we didn't know we had and a source of self-confidence we thought we'd never earn. We have grown from standing in mute terror before a microphone to interviewing others, and from having our hands shake in the broadcast studio to feeling "in control" all alone in the station.

We hope our collective will grow, especially to include women from other backgrounds. Right now it's good to have a medium for speaking to our sisters. ■

Lori Hanson & Jan Mandel

ALIVE & TRUCKING



The Alive and Trucking Theatre was born in Minneapolis during the summer of 1971 after a women's conference in Madison, Wisconsin. We saw the Madison Street Theatre perform The Independent Female or A Man Has His Pride and knew its strength and joy was what Minneapolis needed. Women in our community who had been working in a Women's Counseling Service and men who had been working in draft counseling and a men's group joined to produce the play. We rehearsed for two months at night in our homes. In the beginning we planned to do the play for one weekend for our friends. We rented a theatre with lights, bought some costumes, called lists of people from women's and radical organizations, and performed. People kept coming. We held the play over for three weekends and toured it to parks in Minneapolis. We traveled in a VW bus, set up a handmade curtain, and walked through the neighborhood with an accordion to get people to come. The response was tremendous. Two women and a man from the original cast decided to form a permanent feminist theatre company.

We did not discuss becoming an all women's theatre group at that time because our experience with The Independent Female indicated to us that we could successfully deal with issues of feminism in a mixed group. At different times during the year we started an all women's workshop which we hope to create permanently next year. We see the need for an all women's workshop for our special needs in terms of physical exercises. Also, we need to be able to write and create plays at our own pace. It is also necessary for women in the group to work together to struggle with our oppression.

Our main obstacles were: 1) finding other people, 2) finding a place, and 3) getting money. We have always had difficulty deciding who was to be in the group. At first anyone who came and hung around long enough stayed. Later we held weekly workshops open to the public, as a way of working with people who were interested in the group. At other times, when we have had to recruit people quickly, we have held public auditions. We have recently clarified our individual commitment to the theatre by dividing into full and part-time people. So far, to be a full-time person is to take responsibility for one of the projects we are currently working on (the book, a new play, the workshops), to participate on a crew for the current play, to take voice and gymnastics classes weekly with the group, and to be eligible for a salary. We split up the income among the people who perform a play. To be part-time is to take one class or come to workshops weekly and to be in a play.

We found a building that was going to be torn down in a year and rented it full-time for \$100/month. We built a lightboard and bought 150 watt bulbs and extension cords to make a very crude and illegal lighting

system. By performing the melodrama for women's groups and schools, we were able to pay the rent, but we also held part-time jobs driving cabs, cleaning floors, and dishing vegetables. Additional money came from an experimental college which paid us as artists in residence and from a \$1.50 admission fee to plays. We still barely survive.

To improve our skills we started taking classes in mime, dance, and voice. Whenever possible all of us would audit a class at the University. Otherwise, one of us would take a class and teach the skill to the others. In a particularly affluent time, we hired a gymnastics teacher and all studied tumbling. Jerzy Grotowski's exercises in Towards a Poor Theatre encouraged us to begin work on backbends and splits, and to condition our bodies for the first time.

By October we had grown to a group of eight. We exercised together daily and wrote a play, Pig in a Blanket, about our experiences as men and women in a sexist society. This play turned out to be an excellent consciousness-raiser. As an experiment we separated the audience by sex and were amazed to hear the different reactions to scenes. The play includes a rape scene, a bedroom conversation between a couple after they had made love, and a family of apes turning into Barbie and Ken dolls.

Writing and producing a play is the most tense time for us. Some people develop ideas and write scripts faster than others who feel they aren't contributing an equal share. The week before a play opens, we all suffer from insomnia, nightmares and nervousness. The group dynamics—general hatred and nastiness—would make a psychologist faint.

At this time we have stopped performing Pig. Although it is a strong first encounter with sexual politics, we found our audiences afterwards talking mainly about whether their husbands cooked breakfast on Sunday morning. We had not related sexual oppression to the institutions that embody it. Instead we viewed women's oppression as coming only from men (which was how we first experienced it). As we performed the play, it gave us strength to deal with our personal relationships and increasingly we felt the need for a deeper analysis that would locate the sources of people's oppression within our capitalist society and give people a direction in which to move. We now see the necessity of not only changing our personal lives, but of struggling together against the institutions and relationships—economic, social and political—that oppress us. Pig in a Blanket has been published in a book along with the rest of our plays, and we encourage other groups to perform it.

To understand how change could occur we looked to the people's struggles of the past. We began to research the history of Minnesota and were excited by

what we found. We learned that men and women in Minnesota were some of the strongest fighters for freedom. Many were involved in socialist movements throughout the state. We wanted to write a history of workers that would help people learn about or remember their own history. We also wanted to write a history of women. We believe that history could help women and working people recognize our collective fate and encourage us to build a force to produce change. For months we studied at the Historical Society and talked with people who had lived through the last century. The completed play, The People are a River, was incredibly difficult to write. Trying to decide what to include, how to talk about the American Indian, how to write a history of women, how to talk about present movements, left us exhausted. After 5 months we had a first draft that was about 3 inches thick. It went through many collective changes before opening night and is still in process today. The props and sets we built and painted ourselves. Costumes were hand-made or purchased at Goodwill or The Salvation Army. We publicized by putting up silk-screen posters and sending press releases to tv, radio and newspapers.

The play opened on the first anniversary of the theatre's birth. It has been successful in attracting a diversified audience of senior citizens, working people, and housewives. Churches and schools are booking it around the state and we have applied for grants to enable us to take it to small towns and colleges all over Minnesota. The play has been video-taped for nationwide distribution.

At a community feed and feed-back (a potluck dinner with the community to talk about the play) people gave us suggestions and criticisms of the play. Women felt the play should not only reveal women's oppression and struggles of the past, but should also create a vision of our future. People suggested we have rap groups after the play and literature tables to establish a stronger link between us and our audience. The play could also give more concrete suggestions to people as to what groups and actions are happening that they might be interested in. One of our great weaknesses

has been maintaining contact with audiences after a performance.

We have increased in size and are struggling with the questions of whether or not to have a director, how to insure that all people have a chance to learn new skills, and how to handle the office work. As we have more bookings to fill, we are trying to become more efficient. We have hired a friend to do booking for us. Individual people are responsible for certain skills: one person teaches voice and one gymnastics. To write plays we split into groups of two or three. After a play is written, however, anyone can present proposed changes and then the group decides. Presently, we appoint one or two people to direct and co-ordinate rehearsals.

The theatre has grown in complexity as well as size. We now have two children working with us and three musicians. We are helping a community write a skit to help fight a freeway busting up their neighborhood. Some people wrote an anti-war play using a cast of clowns and performed it downtown. A women's history cranky will be shown next summer in the parks. We are thinking about further study and plays about women's history, old age, and plays for children. We still are struggling with group dynamics and power relationships and we are learning how to be an effective organizing tool that will maintain contact with people we touch with our plays. We are an all white theatre and hope in the future we can be a multi-racial group. Our different political ideas and feelings do not get equally represented.

We write this article in hopes that every city, neighborhood, and workplace will have its own theatre. For scripts, further information, contact: Alive and Trucking Theatre, 2746 Stevens Ave. South, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

If your group is considering producing the San Francisco Mime Troupe's play, The Independent Female, be sure you contact them for rights to the play: San Francisco Mime Troupe, 455 Alabama St., San Francisco, California. ■



Shirley Parry, Baltimore



A FREE REELING FEMINIST: interview with Julia Reichert

Sylvia Gillett, Baltimore

Julia Reichert is one of the founders of New Day Films, a co-operative formed to distribute films about women. She directed the film Growing Up Female (reviewed in Women, Vol. II, no. 3) and is currently working on two films, one about women and crime, the other about methadone. She is also a member of the National Committee of the New American Movement which is a newly formed organization working toward democratic socialism in the United States. She has worked particularly in the area of socialist feminism. As part of the staff's struggle to deal with the cosmic questions about art raised by this issue of the Journal, we decided to ask Julia to discuss her views on feminist art, especially the art of making feminist films.

Sylvia: I wonder if you could explore the question of the contribution of feminist films to the women's movement. Do you think that films have any particular advantage over other forms of art?

Julia: I think films tend to be very effective in bringing the reality of other women's lives to women in the movement or to women in general. They convey a very emotional quality. For that reason they're good at bridging gaps between working women and women in the movement or between black women and white women, for example. Films can tend to promote an understanding and a sense of collective struggle among different sectors of the population.

Then there's also the entertainment value. Since people come to see films, films can bring new women into the movement.

Films can also suggest new political ideas and raise the level of struggle within the movement. The Women's Film, for example, raises issues broader than just feminist issues, like the issue of class struggle.

Also women can gain a sense of pride in the energy and creativity and power of women who can take control of the media. You get this sense when you see an art exhibit by a woman or read a book by a woman, but particularly with the media because women have so suffered at the hands of the media and are so controlled by it. It's really wonderful to see women beginning to create our own images of ourselves. We've begun to give ourselves and other women the information that we feel is valuable to us, instead of being controlled by someone else's information or images.

Sylvia: Do you think there is a female aesthetic? Do the films made by women differ from those made by men in content, perspective, or style?

Julia: That's a very complex question that's been raised a lot. Before I really got into it, I'd like to talk about my experience working with an all-female crew (except for my partner, Jim Klein). I've had an all-female crew for the two films I'm working on now, but not for Growing Up Female. In a way this has to do with the question of a female aesthetic because the way the film crew works has a lot to do with how the film comes out.

Most of the time there was a wonderful sense of cooperation and a sense of supporting each other when there were difficulties. For example, if one of us were sick and had a hard time going on or got really frightened before doing an interview, the other women were very supportive. I did not see that same sense of support and cooperation with male crews.

More important, in a way, was the crew's emotional involvement with the people we were filming. They weren't just subjects to be examined; they were people to be listened to. The crew talked to them be-

fore we filmed and afterwards. We became involved in their lives. It wasn't "Come in, let's get the stuff, and leave," which I think tends to be more the male attitude. I think the fact that people are relaxed and intimate with us will come out in the final film.

To return to the question of a female aesthetic, in my opinion you have to look first at the much more basic question of how a person's consciousness develops. (By consciousness I mean one's way of looking at the world, at oneself, one's rationale for the choice of actions, understanding of people, political views, etc.) Consciousness develops through very complex social, economic, and historic forces that we are all a part of. The women's movement has discovered that women as a group are affected in certain similar ways--we have similarities in experiences and therefore in consciousness. Since women are socialized as a group, there must be a female aesthetic in a general way. But it's not that simple. People brought up as part of a particular race or class are also affected by certain economic and social forces and have different ways of looking at the world.

I think that art is a concrete expression of a person's view of reality as filtered through his or her own particular consciousness (which is tied up in their class backgrounds or the historical period they grew up in, their sex, their age, their life experiences, and to a certain extent, of course, their individual personality characteristics, which you can never quantify the way you can their age or sex). But it's an elitist view of art to say that there are some people who have an extra gift in addition to their humanity that somehow makes them an artist. People have genius in many different areas, but they usually are not given praise or support for their special talents.

I think that people develop their potential because of the chances they've had in life. In our society artists are more often than not men, more often than not wealthy people. Most filmmakers I know are very wealthy. They're filmmakers because they had a chance, to go to college or to get help from parents, for example. I was very lucky myself; I had a chance to go to college. A person who didn't probably would not get to be a filmmaker, a painter, or a playwright.

Sylvia: I see the question of a female aesthetic as really double-edged since women's art has traditionally been put down because it's been considered different and trivial in some way.

Julia: I think it's more a problem of the people who judge art, who are either men or have (I hate to say) a male way of looking at things. I think that people are not yet accepting of the feminist viewpoint of the world and that women's art hasn't really been taken seriously for what it is. The same is true to perhaps an even greater extent for art that emerges from the working class or art that emerges from black people. First of all, there's very little of it for lots of the same reasons that there's so little women's art. Even female-made films tend to be from upper class or upper middle class women. There's just not the opportunity for people of different classes to express themselves.

Sylvia: The staff of the Journal has just seen quite a

few feminist films and we've noticed that often the films center around an interview with one woman or several women without much action. We wondered why women filmmakers have so often chosen an interview form.

Julia: On the simplest level it could be financial reasons, or it could be that women are just beginning to learn filming skills. Filming someone giving an interview is easier than filming someone doing a lot of activities. It's also much less expensive. I think there's a political reason too. Women see the value of talking to other women and meeting other women, not necessarily in action. Maybe that's what consciousness-raising has taught us--the value of an individual's experience.

The sharing of experience through an interview is an important contribution, but it does have certain limitations. If you talk to a person for half-an-hour or an hour, you've only learned about them in one very limited way. You've listened to them talk about themselves and maybe express their emotions, but you haven't shown people working, relaxing, or doing things with their families. Showing people interact with others allows you to see people in the fullest way. Interaction, not just action, is something we're trying to do a lot more of.

Sylvia: Would you talk for a while about the difference between art for propaganda's sake and art for its own sake?

Julia: I think that's a really destructive distinction, and I think feminists and politically aware people should begin to see right through it. To me art is basically communication, and all art, (whether purposefully or not,) has values that it puts forth. What is called "propaganda" in a pejorative way is simply art that's created when the artist takes seriously his responsibility as a communicator of values, ideas, actions--when he or she considers the audience and considers the effect of this message on the audience--whether it be an explicit message, such as urging people to go out and demonstrate against abortion, or whether it be an implicit message.

I will give you a fairly long example. Let's say that you want to show women as strong. You may do a film about one strong woman. The explicit message is that women are strong, but the implicit message may be that there are individual superwomen that have made it and that other women can achieve liberation through their individual struggle. If a film showed a group of women struggling together collectively, the implicit message would be much more valuable to the movement because it would show that collective struggle, not individual action, liberates us and creates change.

Sylvia: Would you say then that all art somehow serves a political purpose?

Julia: Yes. For example, you might say that a Western or a James Bond film is apolitical, but obviously that's incorrect. They teach the values of violence and the values of "macho" masculinity. They're totally political. It's just that the people making them have not taken seriously their responsibility as communicators and they just don't express values that they feel

are going to be useful to people.

It's too bad that "propaganda" has been considered manipulative. I don't see it that way at all. Of course I realize that many films that are criticized as "propaganda" are put down because they are rhetorical, unemotional, unsubtle, mechanized, etc. But films that convince, films meant to change consciousness don't have to be that way... in fact, to be effective, should not be.

Sylvia: How do you see your own personal responsibilities as an artist?

Julia: First of all, I want to take the responsibility of considering the audience I'm speaking to and of determining why I decided to speak to them. I probably would not choose wealthy people or the managers of factories as an audience, for example. I would want an audience that I felt had the potential to change in progressive ways. Where is that audience right now? What are the important issues to them? How can I speak directly to them? What are they thinking? What are they feeling? What approach is the best for getting across a particular idea? How would I give them a sense that they can have power over their own lives?

I think this gets into some ideas I have about where I think women's films lead and about the directions that I think my own filmmaking as a woman should go. I'm coming from a really different point than I was two years ago when we made Growing Up Female. At that point I was mainly interested in making films about women's problems, issues, consciousness, and I felt that it was important for large numbers of women to realize that women are oppressed and to see the sources of their oppression. I still feel that that's

important, but now we've grown to the point where the women's movement is very wide-spread and has affected women who are maybe not directly involved in the movement. The women in Growing Up Female are passive. Now I think it's important for women to begin to see images of strong women and of people in general struggling against the heavy oppression of our society. We should show not just what is (though we shouldn't gloss over what is), but also how we can change what is. I think people are frustrated and confused and powerless and I think we need to see new possibilities. Growing Up Female leaves you feeling depressed and maybe angry (which is a step above depressed). But now I think people really need to see films which will inspire them to seek strength and power for themselves.

Another thing which comes out in Growing Up Female, but which I feel even more strongly now is that we have to see working people, third world people, and poor people in our films and in our art. They're really the majority, but they're very rarely seen unless they're seen as just poor, oppressed masses that we have to help. Political films have to make us see those people as individuals.

I'm beginning to move away from the idea of women's films that deal with women as a separate issue, distinct from other kinds of social and political issues. I think the women's movement should see itself as part of the larger radical movement for social change, as striving for many of the same goals that working people, third world people, anti-war movements, and anti-imperialist movements are striving for. We should see ourselves as part of the broader social context, not as a separate movement with separate goals. I'm not saying that the independent women's movement should end; I think that it's crucial that it should continue. But it should not continue in as much an isolated fashion as it has. I think it's important that we begin to identify the cause of our oppression as the capitalist system, not men.

I want to begin to make those connections in my films. I want to make films that have both men and women in them, but that definitely reflect a feminist perspective--not rhetorical, dealing with emotions, those kind of values that the women's movement has taught me. They shouldn't deal exclusively with women, but on the other hand, they shouldn't have just a little "here is the women's problem" section either. The whole film should be infused with feminist thinking and should strive to integrate feminism into the all over struggle for radical change.

Sylvia: How have you been able to apply these ideas to your own filmmaking?

Julia: We are working now on a film on women and crime. We planned originally to make a feminist film about the problems of women with the justice system. Then as we began to meet a lot of women who had been in prison, who had been prostitutes, or shoplifters, or drugdealers, we started to realize that racism was really the primary issue in terms of the justice system. There were definitely areas where women were discriminated against, but much more severe was the oppression of third world people.



Donna Pollach, Portland, Oregon



About New Day Films

New Day Films is a distribution co-operative for films about women. The project began in September 1971 with the distribution of only one film, Julia's Growing Up Female. Since then it has expanded to include the films of four other women filmmakers: Liane Brandon, Amalie Rothschild, Claudia Weill, and Joyce Chopra.

These women decided to distribute their films through their own co-operative because they found that other distribution alternatives were few and generally unsatisfactory. Since the main motive of conventional distributors is profit, they would not distribute films which, while useful, might not return a high rate of profit, nor would they attempt to create audiences among third world or working people who might be unable to pay the usual high rental fees.

Since all the women of New Day made their films in order to educate and change people, not for personal monetary gain, they needed a distribution alternative which would enable them to reach as wide an audience as possible. By establishing their own co-op, they have been able to create a new audience for their films. They recently sent out a mailing to prisons, and they attempted to make contact with women's unions. Plans are also underway to make used copies of their films available to women's and other interested but impoverished groups for reduced fees.

As for their own financial needs, the co-op promises to be, while not spectacularly remunerative, at least self-supporting. Part of the co-op's ability to survive and grow has been due to what Julia calls "an underground network of interlocking communication" formed by women's groups and publications all around the country. As part of that underground network, we urge all women to see as many of New Day's films as possible.

Films currently available are: Julia Reichert and James Klein, Growing Up Female; Amalie Rothschild, It Happens to Us; Liane Brandon, Betty Tells Her Story and Anything You Want to Be; Claudia Weill and Joyce Chopra, Joyce at 34. For information about the films, write to New Day Films, 267 West 25th Street, New York City 10001.

That realization made me take a leap in my mind. I saw that in this case we couldn't deal just with women. We had to deal with the fact that mostly black women and brown women are involved in crime and question why that is. We also began to realize that just about everyone that had been in prison had also been a junkie at one time or another. So we put the women and crime film aside for a while to work on the issue of methadone since we saw that drug addiction was a huge related problem.

We're now making a film about people on methadone, not just about women. However, throughout the film we have women talking just as much as we have men talking (not just a little section on women) and we have attempted to make the whole film in a feminist manner by dealing not just with the laws and politics of methadone use in the rhetorical sense, but also with people's feelings and the way methadone changes their lives. We're trying to integrate all of our political thinking in this one film, which is difficult because we're grappling with a lot of questions.

I just realized that one thing we didn't talk about throughout the whole interview was the fact that I work with a man. He always gets overlooked. This is really unfortunate. The experience of most women is that as filmmakers or as artists they get overlooked because they're women. Now with the emphasis on feminist art, the fact that I work with a man is very much overlooked. The publicity for our film often lists "Julia Reichert" and "J. Klein" almost to hide the fact that he's a man, as if somehow it's illegitimate for a man to work on a feminist piece of art. To me that attitude comes out of the women's movement seeing itself as women only. He's a man, but he's also a feminist. He and I have a wonderfully creative working relationship. We have to encourage men to work with us and to grapple with the same questions we are.

Sylvia: Are there other ways you are trying to express your political viewpoints in your films?

Julia: One way is in the actual process of producing the film. For example, usually in filmmaking the people in the film are looked upon as subjects. You turn the cameras on, ask people questions, probe them, and turn the cameras off. That's the extent of their involvement in the film. We're striving to include them in the process of making the film. We want to encourage them to say what they feel is important to have in the film. Why should we make all the decisions about what questions to ask, what sort of activities to show, and how to portray them?

In the methadone film, for example, we asked the people we were filming what they would say to people about methadone, what they thought should be included in the film. We haven't been able to involve them in the technical process except to have them look at the footage and help us decide where to cut things. We definitely believe though that a film should be not just about a group of people and an issue, but partly by the people involved in that issue. The overall concept is that it's important to make political films in a political way. ■

women and sports



Ed Zeidman, Baltimore

Darlene Kelly, Baltimore

Sport, as it presently is practiced in our sexist society, is an exercise in masculinity. A casual glance at the sport page of any metropolitan newspaper provides a graphic example of sport being shown as a stronghold of male dominance where females are not accepted and are not welcomed.

Newspaper coverage of women in sport provides classic examples of some of the prejudices faced by women who find sport a joyful challenge. First, the press gives little coverage to the few female competitions that do exist. Secondly, those articles that are found in newspapers are more often than not judged newsworthy because male editors consider them to reveal the strange and the unusual. Such cases as the woman jockey, the woman baseball umpire, or a woman's football team have been the subjects of a considerable amount of press coverage due to their novelty; however, encouragement in the form of public recognition or objective reporting is seldom, if ever, accorded the female athlete. When women's events are reported, the adjectives used by reporters habitually emphasize the traditional "feminine" image, rather than relating her accomplishments, her excellence of behavior under conditions of stress, or her movement proficiencies. Such adjectives as "cute," "little," "poised," "graceful," and "feminine" fill these descriptions. It is clear that the men who report the sport scenes cannot accept females as equal human beings in the traditionally masculine coven of sport.

What female athlete has the same learning opportunities, the same facilities, the same equally competent coaching, is given the same recognition and prestige for her achieved excellence in her sport?

That female athlete can only be the female race horse. It appears that when our society deals with a horse's ability to run it is able to do so without confusing the notion of sex with the notion of ability; however, that same clarity is not apparent when evaluating the ability

of a human being to run. This confusion of sex with person in sport is so well inculcated in our institutions, our media, our attitudes and values towards sport that we often think sport itself, and those inanimate objects connected with sport, are sexual in their nature. Witness the number of "girl's gymnasiums" (usually the smaller or older ones) and "boy's gymnasiums" (usually the larger or newer ones).

The confusion of sex with person in sport is taught when we hand a boy infant a football, dress him in a size "6 months" football jersey, while we hand the girl a majorette's baton. (And noticeably there are no popular sport costumes for little girls.) By adolescence and adulthood, the confusion of sex with person has countless expressions and behavioral forms, all governed by vague, stereotyped, confused thought --thought which is at best ill-defined and based on outdated lifestyles. But, these attitudes should not be underestimated in their effect, for they provide the basis for those invisible but powerful social forces that every woman who participates in sports feels. It is this confusion of sex with person that perpetuates sexism in sport.

A major contributor to sexism in sport is the male concept of the female body as a sex object. This can be most clearly seen by an analysis of the characteristics of those sports which a patriarchal society deems acceptable for female participation. The movements that are performed in tennis, golf, swimming, and gymnastics are such that they can be captured by photography and continue to show women in the picturesque and alluring poses of the pin-up girl. These pictures, when reproduced on the sports pages, do not present visual dissonance to the male viewer's pre-established concept of the female as a sex-object body. Secondly, these movements when captured in still photography present the female athlete as a visual illusion: the viewer sees an image of grace,

poise, balance, and beauty without a display of the power, force, and strength that are in truth needed in order to perform them. It is also noteworthy that the traditional costume of these sports, short skirts, bathing suits, and leotards, conveniently fit into the male image of what a female should look like in order to be an attractive sex object. All in all, the display of a woman's body as an object while she participates in these socially-approved-of sports is within the traditional male concept of a woman being an acquiescent, passive human being who is likely to submit to his dominant will. Hence men find it easier to accept female involvement in these particular sports.

A second major contributor to sexism in sport is the concept that a "feminine" female is not aggressive but is rather a passive avoider of confrontation. This attitude also contributes to the greater degree of societal approval given to women who participate in tennis, golf, swimming, and gymnastics, while a woman who participates in other sports, such as softball or basketball, is looked upon with suspicion. In the forementioned individual sports the confrontation with an opponent is minimized. Nets divide the tennis court, ropes separate the swimming lanes; thus, no direct confrontation, no touching or bodily contact can occur. The opponents in golf, swimming, and gymnastics do not even face one another in their competition, and hence, the visual presentation of one woman finding out if she is faster, stronger, more agile, more skilled and more cunning than another is not as emphatically displayed to the viewer. The sense of a woman seeking to achieve and display her own achieved level of excellence and testing her degree of achievement in the contest of sport is much more subtle in these four sports than in the sports of basketball, flag football, softball, soccer, judo or lacrosse.

The female who participates in team sports meets a particularly strong adverse reaction. Largely, this is due to an erroneous male attitude that in team sports one must be a dominator, a power hunter, a hater of the others with whom one competes. The female who participates in team sports is the victim of the misconception that all team sports are a struggle, a rivalry concerned with the conquest and destruction of the other. Team sports in particular have been greatly misunderstood by players and viewers alike, as being a "masculinity rite," as Jack Scott points out in the February, 1972 issue of *Ramparts*. Sport as a power struggle is a misconception. But as long as sport is so misunderstood, the female who participates in sports of a team nature will be misperceived, and will suffer social prejudice as the result of her quest for her own excellence in team sports.

A fundamental of participating in sport, for all persons and at all levels, is a dialectic between cooperation and competition. Sport is an artificially created form of human movement expressions, codified into situations and conditions under which people can judiciously contend with one another in a contest. As the word "contest" literally means, sport is a testing with one another and not a power struggle against another nor an effort to destroy another. In the initial creation of sport, the Greeks set down rules which outlined conditions by which two or more human

beings could test one another and stipulated situations so that each would have equal opportunities under which to display his ability. Sport thus arose as an artifact of the Greek conception of the justice that was to prevail when more than one person sought his "arete", i.e., his excellence. Essential to this conception of sport is cooperation with one another. To behave morally and humanely in sport is to abide by the rules that have previously been agreed to. It is to respect and to honor, indeed to be thankful for, the other, since without them your own seeking of excellence would not be possible. It is only when this initial conception of sport is rediscovered, understood, and practiced, and only when the cooperation that is integral to sport receives stress, that the benefits of sport to human behavior can be clarified in understanding and magnified in practice.

Women, who have not been initiated into the false masculinity rite concept of sport, can do much to recreate its original concept of judicial and humane behavior between persons who are contesting. But equally as important, we should ask what sport participation can enable women to discover and accomplish in their own quest for development as equal persons?

The female who has the continued opportunity to learn to move skilfully learns that she as an individual is an effective action-producing agent within her life-world. She learns in a real, whole-felt experience the lesson of "I can!" Further, she learns that she can continue to be better than she is now. She learns that this improvement comes only with the intent to change her present condition, only with diligent practice and only with repeated attempts to accomplish. This devotion to a persistently sought-after improvement over a period of time is an essential lesson for women to learn as they seek to improve conditions in all aspects of their lives. In sport she can do this in a public forum that allows others to take notice.

The learning of movement patterns is especially helpful in teaching children the "I Can" lesson. The foundations of attitudes toward self are established long before abstract reasoning or verbal abilities are well developed in the child. Hence, movements which the child can observe provide a valuable medium for laying the foundations of the "I can" feeling toward self. Positive movement task programs should be an integral part of the day care center.

Females of all ages can greatly benefit from participation in sports for physical conditioning. Since a third of all married women in America today hold jobs outside the home, as well as manage a house and raise a family, in all likelihood they have a greater need for a higher level of physical fitness than do many males.

Team sport participation may well have the most to offer the emerging female. In team sports one's own personal accomplishments are appropriated by the others on the team and are thereby doubly significant, as they help the group accomplish its goals. Women who participate in team sports have to work with the other women on the team with the spirit that each makes her contributions and that each takes responsibility and credit for the outcome. To date women

have not had many opportunities to work together as a group striving for a common goal. Team sports are unique in that they demand that precisely this kind of cooperation be learned. The care, concern, and respect that develop among team sportswomen who jointly meet risk creates a communion seldom found in other endeavors. The sense of functioning as an effective self, within a context of being one of a group of women who produce a group action that is effective, and that has been cooperatively worked for through long, difficult hours of practice, is the meaningful reward for the team sport participant. Those who think that winning is the point of sport participation have only watched—they have not played.

Concrete acts of discrimination against women in sport are legendary. However, a few examples of practices will suffice to raise the question of what changes are needed and what women can do to effect equal opportunities for women in sport.

Every standard of excellence of performance within sport is a male standard. Thousands of girls have learned to throw correctly and effectively only to be told that "you throw like a boy," rather than "you throw very well." Females by the droves play basketball yearly in America, yet invariably when one attends a women's basketball tournament one hears from the stands such utterances of amazement as, "Wow! did you see that girl? She did a one-hand jump shot!" It is seldom noted, but it is the case, that all sports that have been invented to date (with the possible exception of sky-diving) have been designed to magnify those particular aspects of physiology in which males excel. No sports have been designed to magnify the physiological aspects in which females excel. Should such sports be invented, female participants should always have the edge and should attain higher performance levels than their male counterparts.

The attitudes that females' participation in sport is not as important as males' is frequently exhibited by the governing bodies that manage sports events. Practices of arranging meet schedules for the convenience of male competitors while female competition must be scheduled in piecemeal are common. As recently as January, 1973, the *New York Times* News Service reported that Fred Thompson, a noted coach of women's track teams, charged that there was conscious discrimination against women athletes by the groups who organize track and field meets.

Discrimination against women participants in some sports also exists on the recreational level. A golf course in Maryland denies women the right to play on the course during the prime hours of Saturday mornings. A member of the Ladies Professional Golf Association could not play that particular course on Saturday morning in spite of her excellent ability. There is, however, no denial to male golfers irrespective of how poorly they play.

The school sports picture for women also harbors incidents of discrimination, though there has been noted improvement in recent years. Boys' athletic teams practice daily in the choice hours immediately after school, while it is not unusual that girls' teams, if they exist, practice irregularly or at times least

conducive to good study habits. In short, the girls get to practice when the boys don't need the gym. School sport budgets, publicity, and recognition are likewise inequitable.

If females are to have equal opportunity to experience the joys and the lessons of sport participation, then changes are needed in the American sports scene.

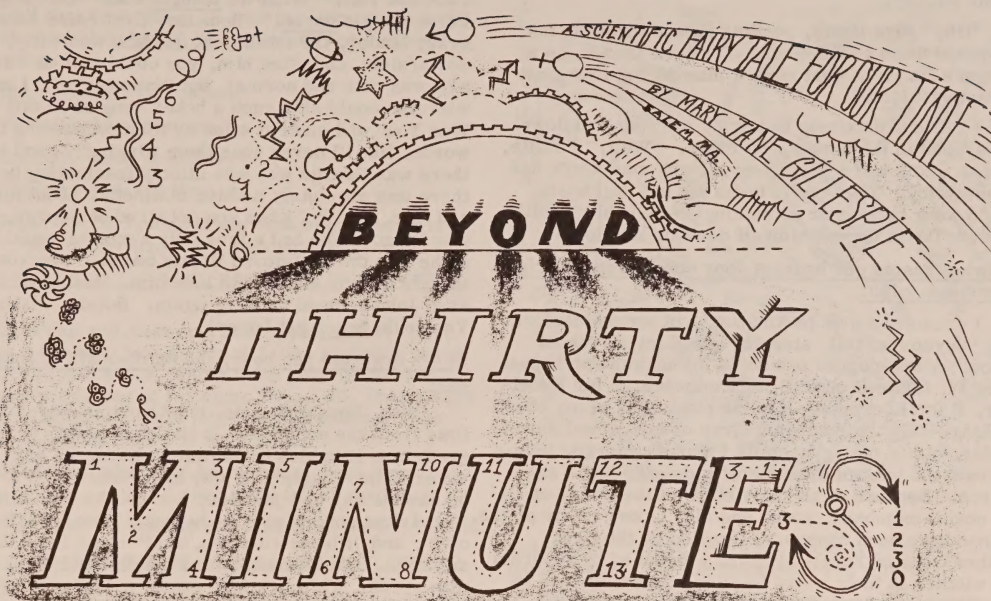
Women readers of the newspaper sport pages, sport magazines, and radio and television shows need to express their frustration at the media's practice of continually presenting sport as being a male endeavor. Women sport reporters, doing in depth interviews of women athletes, need to be presented to the public. Such communication efforts would serve not only to heighten the awareness of the inequitable practices, but would also begin to present the female model within the realm of sport.

Local groups of women need to inquire of their school, recreational programs, and sport clubs the amount of money and the quality and number of facilities and equipment made available for females. Over half of the money raised through student fees to support extracurricular sport programs comes from females, but seldom is half of the money used to support programs for those same females.

Sport programs for women must be encouraged, organized, and coached by women. For generations we have taught young girls how to become women in the home and more recently in careers; it is now time to do so on the playing field. Men can teach women techniques in sport, but they cannot teach girls to be women who are secure in their own identity as women. Men can only teach women to be sub-standard copies of men, for maleness is all that a male coach can know. Further, it is doubtful that many males can appreciate what it is like to be a woman who participates in sport in American society.

Athletic scholarships for women in collegiate sports programs are to be discouraged. When money or other forms of monetary rewards are given to players, it is given in order to insure that one college can dominate the others in athletic endeavors. Athletic scholarships are but another ramification of the conquest concepts that have been so destructive of the humane values of sport. More significantly, scholarships prostitute the meaning of the sport experience for the player, since he or she is merely a hired hand. At present, few athletic scholarships exist for women and some of the unknown have alleged that this is discrimination. It is, but it is a blessing in disguise, since without athletic scholarships the possibility of maintaining sport as an experience to enhance the individual exists to a greater degree for women than for the male collegiate athlete.

Such changes as the above will, with persistent effort, enable all female persons to engage in another aspect of life that interests and challenges them—sport. Women have the right to do so just as every male has had that right in every culture of every period of human history. Upon that day of accomplishment, sport in America will no longer be an exercise in masculinity, but truly a discovery of one's best self. ■



Several years ago, I watched David Susskind on a television interview with about four or five groupies. An insane show. The girls seemed to know and hate each other well; like movie stars nobody knows, each tried to upstage the other; to impress the world with who they knew. Vainly, with a dirty old man prodding, Susskind tried to find out how often they really did it. But the girls avoided his questions; they dominated the show with talk about what they thought was important, I'm not sure what. I was mildly interested; groupies interest me; but they were more fun to watch than to listen to.

Finally David found one who agreed to catch his ball. A sleek dark woman sat next to him; she seemed more intelligent and sophisticated than the rest; although her talk was similarly eclectic, even though on a higher plane. She had run off without taking a breath on civil rights marches, people she knew, and making music and friends that someone would remember someday as the good old days now.

"But, but," said David S., "how long do you have to know someone before...? A week? A day? Thirty minutes?"

"Thirty minutes!?" she didn't believe he was for real, "Oh, come on. Don't be silly. I'm beyond all that stuff. I'm way beyond thirty minutes."

Wow, I thought; my interest zoomed. I was amazed--Beyond thirty minutes. She's gone beyond thirty minutes! What does that mean?

I think (although I'm not sure; I'm still learning--so I may be wrong, but) I think it has something to do

with the fact that women are naturally capable of multiple orgasms. Recently that fact has begun to seem very significant. For instance, consider the following conversation reporting on a men's liberation workshop:

"They sat around and they tried to figure out how they could satisfy the poor woman, because they admitted that although they could understand intellectually how a woman might need more than one mate biologically--they couldn't accept it emotionally. So what were they gonna do for the woman who just wouldn't be so satisfied the normal way, you know. So they decided on cunnilingus."

"Huh?"

"Well, the whole thing about women having two orgasms threw them quite a bit."

"Two!--What did they think about 120 orgasms an hour, then?"

"Are you kidding? They didn't get anywhere near that! It's just too overwhelming."

It sure is.

At one orgasm per hour, the key flicks; the motor purrs; the body turns on.

The scene: I am a Hollywood starlet on a talk-show, wearing hot pants, a tight jersey with a bubble-gum machine on the front, a curly wig and strap sandals. David Frost tries to cross his legs and can't because they're too heavy. Sighing, I have just told him that acting is only a frivolous hobby for me. That my most passionate concerns are the Indians, the Nudists, the War, Pollution and the Position of Women

in our society.

"Oh," says David, perking up and throwing his clipboard down on the floor, "Tell me then...As a woman's lib girl, what kind of man do you find most attractive? Me?"

I smile seductively and grind my rear end down and around in the bucket seat chair. "Well," I smile, "a man who's had a vasectomy... any man who's had a vasectomy. That really turns me on! ...I wish they'd wear buttons or something so we could identify them." David throws himself down on the floor.

At two orgasms per hour, a door opens onto a world of endless spins.

I dreamed I was an Amazon...in my maidenform bra. Seven feet tall, stepping out of my riverboat canoe. A one-cupped bra holds my mammoth breast (size 44, triple E cup: E for Eminence, E for Excelsior, E for Enormous)--On the other side of my chest: Nothing--only the macramé strap of my carved arrowholder. I hop out, gracefully for one so large, jumping onto the bank of the Others' side. To begin my search. Because of all the sisters of the tribe, of all the coven-members, young and old, I, now in my prime, I alone have been chosen: designated by the Great Mother Gods of Yore, my name whispered by Supernal old witches in their weird haunted houses, chosen to be: The One. Sacred Diana who grabs the Annual Male--("There he goes--Mis--ter Amazon!") I must find a likely specimen, knock him out, gag him and carry him over my shoulder; his knocked-out head forming an echoing twin sphere on the clear rectangular plane of my naked chest--Bring him back to the canoe--Row him softly across to Our side, where he will become the annual Copulator of the tribe. I know what I must do. I shall fulfill my destiny. Softly, I pull the canoe up onto the shore, covering it with weeds in some nearby bulrushes. Then I stand erect to survey the forest. Stealthily, strongly, I run through the bushes.

At three orgasms per hour, trinity and triangle become One.

I guess you've been wondering what my idea of success is. Sure; I'll tell you. My idea of success is to do a really good imitation of Jerry Lee Lewis singing Great Balls of Fire! But I don't know how to play the piano. Standing up.

Jerry Lee Lewis. Remember how shocking it was when he married his thirteen year old cousin? It was shocking because:

- 1) she was his cousin;
- 2) she was only thirteen years old;
- 3) I was only thirteen years old;
- 4) He married her.

All at the same time! Great Balls!

At four orgasms per hour, Never-Ending Delight assumes the shape of a reality-construct.

If you ever wondered what was so great about the Beatles in 1964, I will tell you now. What we said then was--"Oh boy, they sound just like that good old

rock and roll." What we thought was: "Oh! Boys! I'll never get bored." Because, first came John, the crazy leader, the intelligent one who was witty, but sorta/sick; and after him, you could look at Paul, who was cute and normal, but "interesting", I mean who else could sing such a hokey song as "Until There Was You" and make it stick by mispronouncing the words, like "I never soar them winging"?; and then there was George who was utterly fascinating because there was absolutely nothing distinctive about him; and then, finally, when you got tired of George, there was Ringo! who had a face only a mother could love so he was the best-loved Beatle because everyone thought nobody else would love him. And after Ringo!, even John seemed exciting again. Boiesie, Idaho! You could never get bored!

At six orgasms per hour, the number six in Latin is sex.

Okay, boys and girls, it's Question-and-Answer time from the audience! In the right aisle, an elderly gentleman stumbles to the microphone; he asks that we call him "Siggie" the way his mother used to do; he has the ass of a jawbone, and speaks with difficulty. "Vat I dunt understand!" he begins; "Boo!", "Fuck-off!", and "Please sit down, sir!" come from the audience. I tame them with a single look: "Let the man speak. This is a free country. After all." He smiles warmly up at me, wetting his eyes and mouth. "Ast I vas saying," he continues..."Vat I dunt understand is...what the fuck do women really want?"

I'm tall in a slinkly long gown, cigarette holder in hand; in my Earthy Kitt voice, I sing: "Santa baby...a '54 convertible...lite blue...I really do believe in you...so hurry down the chimney, tonight!"

While singing myself to sleep on that song, when I was eight years old, I had my first orgasm. (That's not true, but it makes a fantastic story; doesn't it, Papa Doc?)

At seven orgasms per hour, reality becomes a dream.

My dream: I am all things. Of all things--a deep sea, shark swimming, Professor Groupie. A nude rock group is playing hard--shake, shake, shake. Beautiful young men, they are mine. As in all matriarchies, egalitarian democracy reigns. They are all equal; there are no stars. Each is my lead man, each my back-up man, as I move among them, removing the fig-string guitar from each, one at a time, taking each away from the music that continues on and on--different each time, but all the same--shake-baby-shake. My hard rock group--I am a groupie, and they are mine.

Germaine Greer says: Why settle for orgasm when you can have Absolute, Super-Dooper Ecstasy? Why indeed.

What do women want? Free, 24-hour, ECSTASY on demand! OR--equal pay for equal work.

I'll march for that.

At eight orgasms per hour, everything is possible.

Textbook: "Pre-historic woman fucked all the time. Well, half the time--literally. The rest of her time

was spent eating, sleeping, and defecating. But think about all that fuck-time! It was just too much, man. Female sexuality had to be repressed for civilization to develop."

But, what is civilization?

"Patriarchy. History."

History--what is history?

"History records time."

But, what if...what if we want to go beyond history? beyond civilization? beyond time?

At nine orgasms per hour, everything moves awfully fast.

Question and Answer Time Again, folks! Here comes a friendly looking young fella, probably never hurt a flea in his life, wants to be your friend and everybody's friend at the same time. Hi, there, nice young fella, speak right into the microphone, Nice Guy, and tell us what you want to know:

Question: What will be the role of the liberated male in your ideal future society?

Answer: To shut up and fuck when we tell him to.

At ten orgasms per hour, downs begin to be covered with ups.

Movie Scene: I play a character named Mrs. Robinson, a once-beautiful woman nearing forty. I am very rich and elegant, dressed in a shapely peg-noire. Morning sunlight filters into my bedroom as I sit at my Chippendale writing desk. Having just finished breakfast in bed, I sip my first cup of coffee of the morning. Mr. Robinson has left for the office; and I am trying to compose an invitation to a "Gala" I am planning for that evening. Inspiration knocks; I write at the top of a sheet of expensive ivory note paper, "Hi! Let's fuck.", and underneath that, "Years from now--when you talk about this--and you will--please be kind." Signing "Mrs. Robinson", I blot the ink and smile, well-pleased with my diction.

At eleven orgasms per hour, I decide to count by tens.

A few Questions That Bother Me:

1) What are the differences between complete sexual freedom for females and the current sexual practices and attitudes of men?

2) Is pure sex a goal or an anathema?

3) Did my mother ever have a personal encounter with God?

4) What kind of toothpaste should I use?

At twenty orgasms per hour, From and To are nothing; only the present movement has meaning.

I'm glad there are Jill Johnstons. Gracie Slicks. Margaret Chase Smiths. Bernadine Dohrns. All those wonderful women who know how to out-macho the men. How to beat them at their own game. How to play well, within the system.

Although, to tell the truth, I, myself, never for once doubted that we could play their game and beat the socks off them. (Show me a man who's had a



vasectomy, and I'll wash his socks!) (Maybe. About once a year. I never believed I was inferior.)

Others, I hear, have. And, for them, it's nice to have Johnston, Slick, Smith, and Dohrn--to know it can be done. But, isn't the point that we don't want to do it? That we don't like their game? We choose--not "to lose"--but "Not to play".

I'm glad there's a Jill Johnston, but I don't want to be like her.

At thirty orgasms per hour, I saw plenty.

How-to masturbate: I tried fantasizing while I masturbated, but it interfered with my masturbation. Sometimes it helps to sing rock and roll songs, but it's better to hum them--or sing nonsense syllables to them (that is, if the lyrics are not already nonsense syllables) because words get in the way of the rhythm. (Note: Do not sing Mick Jagger's I Can't Get No Satisfaction.)

The only thing that seems to help is to do it with a super tampax in. Why? Because it's always better during your periods because that's when they don't want us to do it because it's so much fun then and because they don't want us to have fun? Or because a super tampax looks like a penis (a snow-white penis) which looks like a narrow arrow which looks like a gun which looks like The Empire State Building? (Note: I do not want to try it with The Empire State Building up my ass. "No, thank-you, kindly" instead of "Yes, more please".)

Because: To tell the truth, I see nothing at all. It just attracts the blood faster.

At forty orgasms per hour, I float in slow motion, while galaxies and eons fly past.

Scene: A women's liberation workshop. Open to the public. We have discussed the fact that we need to teach women that they can satisfy themselves sexually;

that they can masturbate to orgasm; that they don't need men for sexual satisfaction. To achieve freedom, women need to know that they can be sexually independent through masturbation.

He: Oh...but that's stop-gap.

She: I can have 120 orgasms an hour. That doesn't sound very stop-gap to me.

At fifty orgasms per hour, your hand gets awfully tired.

A Dialogue on Technique:

The Sensuous Woman: You can buy a vibrator that looks like a penis.

Me: But I want a penis that looks like a vibrator!... Haven't found one though... Yet.

The Sensuous Woman: Do not be embarrassed when you purchase your vibrator. Vibrators can be used for face massage, so your druggist won't know why you're buying it.

Me: Oh, sure. He'll just wonder who the weirdo is who likes to massage her face so much. That's all.

At sixty orgasms per hour, the daughter becomes the mother of the woman.

sociological hypothesis: The greatest evidence of repression of female sexuality in our society is the fact that only a small number of little girls know that they can masturbate to orgasm.

societal solution: Tell them. Whisper to every four year old little girl you see, "Don't stop! Don't. Don't stop!"

Scientific Query: How old does a female have to be to be able to have an orgasm?

Scientific Answer: She doesn't have to be very old at all. A four month old baby girl was observed in her crib, masturbating to orgasm--but she was faking it.

Quaint Anecdote: I asked my friend who is an experienced counselor at girl scout camps about camper masturbation. "Oh sure," she said. "What do you mean by that?" I asked. "Well," she replied, "it doesn't take much to make them happy. All they want to know is that sex is good and there is no God; so I tell them sex is good and there is no God, and they're happy."

At seventy orgasms per hour, there is no turning back, no slowing down, no chance to stop.

Old Wellesley joke: A professor was continually irritated by one student who knit throughout his classes. Everyday he entered the classroom and scowled in her direction; but, everyday, oblivious to his disapproval, she continued to knit during his lectures. Knit, knit, knit. It was driving him crazy.

One day, he couldn't stand it any longer. In the middle of his lecture, he removed his glasses and addressed her. "Young lady," he said sternly, "do

you realize that knitting is a form of female masturbation?"

She paused, looked up, and smiled at him. "Well," she said, "you masturbate your way, and I'll masturbate mine."

At eighty orgasms per hour, Havelock Ellis asked me if I would pee on him, and I said no.

I am no more than an arrangement of quarks--those most elementary, elemental of particles--more basic than atoms, nuclei, protons, or electrons--like flowers arranged in a vase, so the geisha flower arranger. There is nothing that is not quarks. But don't double negatives make a positive? Don't two wrongs make a right? If you say "no", do you mean "yes"? I would change--not only the quarks that I am--but also the non-quarks, or anti-quarks that must also be. Shadows must be changed too; shadows that have never been touched before. If we learn to split the quark, to loose its energy for Our change, we will touch the shadows too. Then we will ask them to talk to us and be known. In the dark light that is to come, all will be different.

At ninety orgasms per hour, millions and billions of turning quarks merge into a seemingly smooth, quiet, still plateau.

In 1962 my child psychology professor at Wellesley, a sweet grandmotherly type certainly, rambling on, mentioned in passing the horrors surgeons had performed on women -- removing uteri for no good cause, and, what is more, sometimes even removing the females' external sex organs. In 1962, I sat in my student chair, thinking: "The vagina?? How do they remove a hole?"

I didn't know about black stars then, either. Black stars (quasars?) are spots of nothingness in the sky. Disintegrating stars, matter moves inward until finally the pull of gravity is so powerful, the density so great, the mass pulls in until there is a patch of nothing there. Remember the trip in 2001? A fall into a black star: A fall, a leap? into another universe, another civilization ---- Beyond.

At 100 orgasms per hour, there is Peace on an unbelievable high.

The bisexual ideal is a beautiful ideal. The bisexual ideal says that in considering only men as sexual partners, I am cutting myself off from 50% of the human population -- How much more wonderful to be open to 100% -- to all the people on this earth!

Why do I fear that in opening up sexually to the female 50%, I will lose that 50% and then have no one (0%) in the world to be close to --- that then I will be truly all alone? Why do the non-sexual relationships always seem to be the deepest, most loving and happiest? Because sex in our world, in our time, is so fucked-up? Is it fucked-up because it is only between men and women? That brings me back in my circle to the idea that to be unfucked-up, sex should be between women and women, too. But -- if I put out for a woman friend, just to be nice, as I put out for men just to be nice, where have I gone? Where am I now? Around in a circle

At 110 orgasms per hour, Peace continues, change will come, both past and future ride together in love.

Question time, boys and girls! No answers, now. . . . What if.

What if -- the only way for the human species to survive on this planet is for the male of the species to wither and die. While the female survives and evolves -- strong, beautiful, and healthy? Then how many men in the street are gonna work to keep the species alive?

"But that's no human being at all!" What? A woman. A woman is no human being. What has always been viewed on a lower evolutionary scale cannot now be viewed as our evolutionary future. I.e., the cockroach. Because the future has always been on a higher evolutionary scale -- i.e., Man.

What if.

Beginning at 120 orgasms per hour, I felt Monumental Total Energy.

I want to become a woman-identified woman. Which has: no earthly meaning. Yet. Out in black space, working, molding out of nothingness -- re-creating the very quarks of my being in the time-tunnel nothingness of a black star quasar, I shall re-create what I will become. Mankind will be blinded by the light to come -- out of a black star.

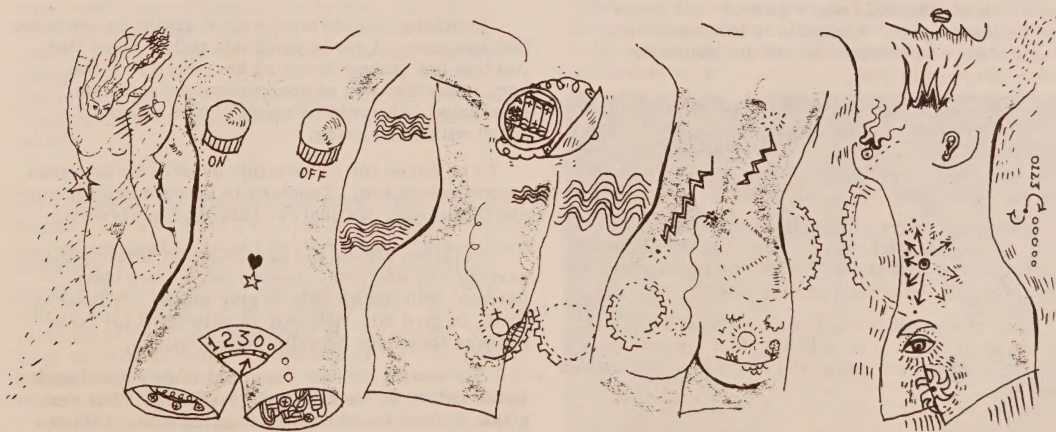
Each orgasm had lasted thirty seconds. At 120 orgasms per hour, there were no breaks between -- Revolutions created one whole orgasm -- An hour was a moment, but there was still time. I knew where I was. In a never-turning, ever-moving blur, I approached the last of the hour, number 120. I counted off as it began -- all the same with no breaks -- counting numbers per second -- ten, eleven, twelve -- counting in the same rhythm of the others -- eighteen, nineteen, twenty -- all of a sudden, all on its own, it started running off faster -- twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven -- AND THEN IT HAPPENED! -- twenty-nine, thirty, thirty-one! The last orgasm lasted 31 seconds! BOOM! 3601 one-second orgasms per hour! But there are only 3600 seconds in

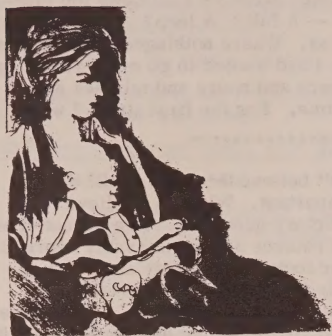
an hour! At 120 orgasms per hour, you are Out of Time -- Beyond thirty minutes --BINGO! Quasars and quarks merge into quirks -- Fast down the tunnel turning round slow -- A fall? A leap? A flight? A search? There I was. Where nothingness shone in a black light. Where I had wanted to go many years ago when there were years and hours and minutes and seconds. Beyond time. For the first time, I was.

I know you won't believe this, but I still think sex isn't all that important. What do I believe? In the truth of contradictory questions. Are we not-free because our sexual natures are unbelievably repressed? Or because our fucked-up society castrates us by defining us totally in terms of our sexuality, to the detriment of our full potential beings? Yes. Has society messed us up by forbidding us female sexuality as distinct from male-oriented sexuality? Has society messed us up by denying the parallelisms in male and female sexuality? Yes. Could the only way to avoid being a sex object be to demand total sexual satisfaction at all times? How can I demand the complete freedom of males and still insist I do not want to use it the way they do? Easy.

I still think sex isn't all that important. But in an age where sex is what Religion used to be, I am a Doubter -- I am not so sure of my role -- am I a true secularist, or one of the first Protestants? An individualist John Wesley who believes that true salvation comes only through one's own personal calling, through grace, through experience, through God's love that cannot be scheduled?

Maybe I'm a Protestant disguised as an atheist/agnostic. I would still like to write a book called Celibacy Can Be Fun, but isn't religious toleration sexual freedom, too? I feel hurt in society's repression of my sense of humor, more than I feel the hurt of sexual repression. You can't miss something you don't know anything about. You can't remove a hole. But . . . learning just a little . . . not much -- just the beginnings of knowledge -- isn't that the age-old catalyst of total Revolution?■





Mothers

Suzanne Muehlenkamp, Baltimore

These articles were written for the South Baltimore Voice under the heading "Mothers." The Voice is a paper written collectively and distributed in a working class neighborhood.

One day last week proved to me that I can't practice what I preach.

I was late coming home from work. It had been a very bust day yet I hadn't gotten a thing done. I picked Peter up from the babysitter and tried to hurry home to catch the news of the road hearings on TV. But there was no way I could make it home without getting some gas. The gas station attendant was busy, and I got home too late for the news.

Peter wanted to play with me and his peg set. We played for a while and then I had enough. But he wanted to play some more. He kept pleading. I blew up--much more than I should have. He started to cry and so I got angrier at him and then I started getting angry at myself for getting angry.

It is just so easy to scream at little children. They are so defenseless and they can't hurt us back. Certainly they can't really hurt us psychologically.

Adults know that no matter what meanness they say to a child, the child won't go away and never speak to them again. The child is too dependent. He will always be there to accept any abuse the adult might need to vent.

I have said things to Peter I never would say to an adult, mean things, things that would really hurt a person. Why do I do this? I know he can understand me, and I know he gets hurt. Peter doesn't have any alternative but to accept it.

When I got angry at his pleading I was really frustrated by my whole day. Peter had only caused about 5% of my real anger. It was just easier, safer to get angry at Peter than anyone else.

When it was all over, I realized what I had done and felt pretty bad. I keep hoping that my understanding of what I am doing will make the occurrences fewer.■

Living with affectionate parents is very important in a child's development. Two incidents recently made me aware of the effect of affection.

One occurred when I was sitting outside on the stoop with my head on my husband's shoulder. Peter's friend stopped Peter and pointed at us as if to say isn't that funny--an old married couple. Peter didn't get the joke and went on playing. The other little boy obviously didn't see much affection between his parents and I would bet he probably didn't receive it.

Everyone gives a baby affection--after all he has to be held. But once he becomes a toddler it is usually only the mother who kisses away tears and gives hugs at night. As the child gets older maybe even the mother feels, too, that the child should be treated "less like a baby" more like an adult. Goodness, does this mean with less touching, with less affection? I fear many people think so.

If the child is a boy he is even less likely to receive hugs. To need affection is a sign of weakness, of being a baby. At what age are fathers never to kiss their sons again? Some fathers probably feel sad that they don't kiss their sons anymore, but after all, he must learn to be a man.

Touching is a physical way of saying to some one that you care. I guess you could tell a friend that you like her without touching her, but I feel one very important way of communicating would be eliminated. It would be much harder to say "I care" without touching.

To be cared for is certainly desired by everyone regardless of age. Touching is appropriate for anyone of any age, not just for babies of newlyweds.

Children who do not see affection between their parents and who don't receive much from their parents, will not be able to give much. At least at first, to give affection will be very hard for them because they have actually learned not to.

My second incident occurred when I was hugging Peter before he went to bed. Suddenly, I felt very good. I knew that I enjoyed hugging him. I liked giving affection. It was fun.■



Interview with Kathy Klipa

Karen Whitman, Baltimore

I was always a tomboy when I was little. I think my father was disappointed in me, not being more feminine and ladylike, but it never bothered me. I just didn't enjoy wearing dresses and playing with dolls and doing the things that were thought of as feminine. I would much rather play ball or go with a gang of boys down to a swimming hole. My father never talked to me about his disapproval, but I could tell by different things he did. He'd go shopping with my mother and come home with a little pleated skirt and a peasant blouse. You can't wear a dress and play football or baseball.

Now, with four children I rarely have any time for myself, but, when I do, what I like most to do is paint. I never took any painting lessons; it's just something I enjoy for myself. One year my father got my brothers a set of oil paints for Christmas. They never used the paints, so I bargained them away.

As a child all my friends were boys. The first girl-friend I had was when I was about 14. We got together and complained about our brothers and bragged about our fathers. The only other thing we ever talked about was movie stars. She had a crush on Tony Curtis and I had a crush on Scott Brady. We collected pictures of them and kept them on our walls. We used to write to them: "Please send me a picture. I think you're so handsome"--and all that crap. I was in love with Scott Brady and intended to marry him. I was determined to get to California somehow and meet him.



The most disappointing time in my whole life was when I was planning to go to Towson State College. My father decided that he just couldn't afford to send me to college, but he waited until the day before I was to go before he told me. Here I had wasted the whole summer when I could have been working and saving money. I didn't think I could work and go to school at the same time. I'm pretty sharp but I don't think I could have taken that schedule. So I just accepted the defeat. My family never stressed education; in fact they never stressed any preference for anything. We were just raised. If I had my life to live over again, I'd go to college, come hell or high water!

I would really like to go back to school, but I have real obstacles in my way--not just things I'm making up. I have four children and my husband doesn't get home until 8 p.m.. We don't have money for a babysitter--we're just barely making it. Another thing that I'm facing right now is that my mother is living with me. Whenever I try to arrange my life so that I have time to do something, she tries to make me feel like I shouldn't be doing it--I should be taking care of my children and my husband and my house. I have this other thing that stands in my way. It's not exactly that I'm self-sacrificing, it's just that I look around me and see that so many of the problems in the world are caused by people's egos, and I just feel that as long as it's not uncomfortable for me, I'm not going to sacrifice the happiness of anyone I love for myself. But I'm trying to raise my daughters differently than I was raised. I try not to criticize them for what they're doing, and to encourage them to be something. I try to let them know that they can be something. ■



The Maid Unwed

*As the sweet apple reddens
high up against the sky,
High on the highest branch,
where the pickers passed it by,
Forgetting—oh, no, not forgetting—
they never could reach so high.*



SAPPHO

Jane Sellman
Baltimore

The controversy over the life and work of Sappho, the poet, rages on at the same time that many people still know little or nothing about this woman, who was considered one of the finest poets of all time. The majority of her poetry is lost, having been burnt in 1073 by church authorities in Constantinople and Rome, as a menace to public morals.

Born around 610 B. C. in Eresos on the island of Lesbos, she was a part of the Aeolian culture where women were granted much social, intellectual, and domestic freedom. They associated freely with males, were highly educated, and attained a degree of self-expression. Lesbian women were quite prominent in the literary arts.

Early in life, Sappho became a compatriot of the poet-rebel Alcæus and was involved with him in the political conspiracies against the several tyrants that ruled Lesbos. She was exiled twice for political activities--being a threat to the established order with her immense popularity and influence as a poet. Because of her great talents in writing as well as in music and dancing, she was already by the age of twenty a model of perfection for the younger residents of Lesbos. In fact, after returning from her second exile, she began a school for young women. It developed such a good reputation that people from the mainland even enrolled their daughters. A few of Sappho's students became poets themselves.

Attempts have been made to discredit Sappho's character and through this, her poetry. Many of the

attacks on her and the myths surrounding her may have been originated nearly three hundred years after her death with the Greek Comedians. It was very hard for Greeks not of the Aeolian culture to understand the freedom that women enjoyed on the island of Lesbos. Because her poetry was so open in its appreciation of beauty in both men and women and so sensuous, it deeply disturbed many people to learn that it was written by a woman. So Sappho became to most residents of Greece, an object of ridicule and scorn.

One myth that has emerged concerns the nature of her death. There is a story that she committed suicide because of her unrequited love for a young sailor, Phaon. The story has been refuted at least to the satisfaction of scholars by a fragment of a poem written by Sappho on her deathbed and addressed to her daughter, Kleis.

"To contradict the celebrated fable of her dramatic suicide from a cliff in consequence of an unrequited love, we have a fragment of her message to her daughter from a calm death-bed: '...For it is not right that in a house that Muses haunt, Mourning should dwell: such things befit us not.

Sappho's sexual activities have been greatly discussed by literary critics and historians. There are two aspects to this discussion: First, that she was what the critics refer to as "sexually promiscuous" and second, that she had sexual relations with other women. It seems highly unlikely that Sappho's character was ever in serious question among her contemporaries.

ries. Her school for young women was popular enough to warrant mainland Greeks sending their daughters to it, regardless of the great distance.

Parents would hardly have entrusted the education of their daughters to someone whose conduct they questioned. But then who is to say what the critics themselves consider proper conduct for female poets.

In attempting to understand some of Sappho's poetry, it must also be understood that love and comradeship among members of the same sex was common and highly valued. How the Greeks approached overt sexual relations between members of the same sex is unclear. Sappho's poetry primarily concerns itself with sensuality not sexuality--appreciation of the

beauty in nature and the beauty of human beings. She wrote quite openly of her love for various men and women around her and devoted many of her poems to her female students. The intensity and purity of her emotion is impressive.

Whatever the nature of Sappho's love, her poetry and her life inspired and continues to inspire many other writers. She serves as an example of a strong woman who was able to serve as a model for her contemporaries and inspire other women, through the fragments of her poetry, to be strong and to be proud of their sensuality.■

* J.C.Stobart, *The Glory that was Greece*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Pub., 1964 p.117.

Sappho the
feminine genius and light of the pagan
universe: who was Pindar's
womanly twin: Tenth Muse:
and most heartbreaking
torchsinger
of all time
was eaten by churchly
roaches.
Through papyrus and parchment they
chewed:
holy roaches of Rome and Byzantium
crawling from hairshirt and monastic pallet
and plush ecclesiastical closet--
a brown blitz
devouring digesting and defecating
the nine lost books of sappho.

In burning libraries and at
great orgiastic autos-da-fe'
she died. Was cursed by
saint and celibate
as love-crazed whore insane pornographer.
Long centuries of woman-despisers
spat their venom. Her great male imitators
sounded the Roman trumpets of
machismo:

"QUID DOCULT
SAPPHO
NISI AMARE PUELLAS?"

Popes poured gasoline upon her head and
bishops lit the match.
The papal curse
upon her poems were their death-writ:
EXCOMMUNICATION THUNDER LIGHTENING
BRIMSTONE AND SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION
OF THE EYEBALLS
be the lot of secret lovers of
these lost
Aeolian airs. Thus
the bonfires burned for a thousand years:
at last
only a bright name
remained.

Her words went underground. Hid out
the harsh centuries
in tombs of ruined cities of the Nile
as mummy wrappings used by ancient
undertakers.



Lynn Jones, Kansas City, Mo.

Hid out in garbage dumps
of cities deep in sand
among grocery lists and unpaid bills
on withered brown
papyrus.
Asyllable.A word. A phrase
brighter than hyacinths among the dust.
A Sapphic line fitting a torn stanza.
Fragments: all that remain:
broken words among broken
wine jars.

And so much lost.
A few poems left us: islands.
Traces of a drowned continent
in whose cities and harbors
once lived an
exquisite race
that celebrated no victories of
pillage or invasion
knew no military arts
and practiced no warfare but
the sweet and terrible warfare of the heart.

-Olga Cabral
New York



Women in the

Women from the WOMEN'S LABOR PROJECT work--in and outside our homes. Some of us teach; others are studying and still others do research writing. We come from different parts of the country--an Oklahoma city, a Midwest farm, a Great Lakes industrial center, and major East Coast metropolitan areas; one of us is from England. We have diverse religious backgrounds as well--Jewish, Catholic, Protestant. We range in ages from 23 to 33; three are single, another is divorced; three more are married; several have child responsibilities. We have all worked at jobs where women are frequently found: waitress, retail clerk, secretary, nurses' aide, lab assistant, school teacher, typist and office clerical. Alongside other women, we have tried to get child care centers in our communities, to secure union representation on our jobs, to end job discrimination against women, and so forth. Now we are interested in teaching and learning from other women workers who share our common problems and dilemmas.

This course concerns women workers. Nearly all American women are workers in the home, a necessary social labor for which we are unpaid. In this course we will focus on the 30 million women who have two jobs: work in the home and outside paid employment. We propose to study women workers, past and present, in order to understand some of the implications for our common future.

At the outset, we will look at women in their paid jobs. Where do we work? Why are these jobs available to women? Where do women have union protection? In what sectors are women organizing? Do women work on different jobs in other societies? How does the job a woman holds affect her image of herself?

In examining women in the family, we will raise a number of questions. How has the family evolved through historical periods and cultures? How have changes in the society affected the family? And how have modifications in the family structure affected the economy? How do families of American women workers function today? And how do women's jobs at home (wife, mother, housekeeper, etc.) shape the rest of their lives?

Institutions, such as schools, courts, churches and temples, all socialize women in certain directions. The popular culture, as reflected in advertising, movies, women's magazines, television, frequently suggests what is appropriate feminine behavior and assigns women to "their place." In our course, we want to identify these images and stereotypes. How

and why have these images changed during the 20th century? What are the effects of such stereotypes on working women?

Besides learning more about ourselves as women workers, people involved in the course can easily relate personal experiences to the general issues raised in the class. Together we will develop strategies for making our homes and jobs, unions and communities more responsive to women's needs as well as encourage each other to become more active and effective in every dimension of our lives. At the same time, reading, speaking and writing skills will improve.

The following outline contains suggested topics and a reading guide. We will prepare a final version drawn from the specific requests of students as well as their unions. Knowing the time limitations that working women face, we have purposely chosen short and interesting readings in order to allow ample opportunity for class discussion. The contours of the course are flexible to permit adaptations to the requirements of any group inviting us to present the course.

NEW YORK WOMEN'S LABOR PROJECT

Veronica Beechey	Susanne Paul
Pamella Farley	Ros Petchesky
Nanette Funk	Pat Welch
Ann Kaplan	Alice Wolfe
Nan Maglin	

WOMEN ON THE JOB: AT THE WORKPLACE

Historical changes in the economy have brought about different demands for women's labor. We will examine the various justifications that have been used to explain the see-saw demand for female workers. Also, we will look at how women are overcoming sex barriers, poor working conditions and other limitations on their jobs today.

I. Working Women: 17th century - 1930's

Readings:

Susan Reverby, "Labor & Suffrage Movement,"
Liberation Now.

Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle (selections).
Alice Clark, Working Life of Women in the 17th Century
Meredith Tax, "Conditions of Working Women in the
Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries" Women,
Vol. 2, No. 3.
Edith Abbott, Women in Industry.

Work Force

Robert Smuts, Women and Work in America,
Ivy Pinchbeck, Women Workers in the Industrial Revolution.

II. World War Two Mobilization and Its Effect on Women's Work

An analysis of the kind, status, and level of new jobs which women entered during the war, the effect of collective bargaining machinery, the contraction in demand and subsequent effects on the employment of women in the post-war period. A discussion of the development of "Momism" during the 1950's.

Readings:

Caroline Bird, Born Female, selections.
New York City Women Workers Project, Transcriptions of selected interviews with women labor organizers.

J. E. Tray, "Women in World War II," URPE, Summer, 1972.

III. Women's Entry into the Sixties' Labor Market

The underlying causes of women's re-entry into the labor force, plus an analysis of the sectors, industries and specific jobs where women are found.

Readings:

"Women in Labor Unions," Monthly Labor Review, February, 1971.

National Manpower Council, Womanpower, 1957.

IV. Problems of Technology, Automation and Women's Work

Readings:

Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, Technology and Women's Work.

V. Specific Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Readings:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, A Unique Competence (An analysis of sex discrimination in the Bell Telephone Co.).

Laws on Sex-Discrimination in Employment, Women's Bureau Pamphlet.

Job Reclassification

Selected data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics
Protective Legislation

Joan Jordan, "The Case for Protective Legislation," Up from Under, Fall, 1970.

"Discrimination Against Women," Hearings before the Special Subcommittee on Education, House of Representatives, 1970.

Unequal Pay

Department of Labor, 1969 Handbook on Women Workers, Bureau of Labor Statistics documents.

Tracking and Training

Department of Labor, 1969 Handbook on Women Workers.

Underutilization of Women Workers
Women's Bureau Pamphlet.

VI. Problems Women Face at Work: Personal Accounts

Readings:

Sisterhood is Powerful, ed. Robin Morgan.

Judith Ann, "The Secretarial Proletariat."

Jean Tepperman, "Two Jobs: Women Who Work in Factories."

Liberation Now!, ed. Madeline Belkin.

Madeline Belkin, "Drowning in the Steno Pool."

Gene Reece, "Pie in the Sky."

Olga Domanki, "Pages of a Shop Diary."

Women, Vol. 2, No. 3

Angela C. Murphy, "'Ladies' in the Lab"

Gene, Lucy, Sue, Ellen and Eileen, "Women Hospital Workers."

Elinor Langer, "Inside the New York Telephone Co.,"
New England Free Press pamphlet.

Margie Albert, "Taking Care of Business," Up from Under, Vol. 1, No. 4.

Dorothy Richardson, "The Long Day," in William O'Neill, Women and Work.

VII. Women Workers in Other Societies

Readings:

Karen Sacks, "Social Basis of Sexual Equality,"

Sisterhood is Powerful.

Charlotte Bunch-Weeks, "Asian Women in Revolution,"
Liberation Now!

VIII. Strategies for Organizing Women Workers



Jill Fessenden, Baltimore

Discussion will center on the low level of unionization among women workers in specific sectors, particularly white collar and part-time, on how unions are serving the specific interests of women workers, and on women's present and potential demands (i.e., child care, worker control, access to widest range of jobs, flexible work hours, equal pay, etc.).

WOMEN ON THE JOB: AT HOME IN THE FAMILY

I. The Family Through History and in Various Cultures

Examination of how family structures and functions have changed from place to place and time to time. We will look at the place of women and men in the family and the changing relationship between the family and society.

Readings:

Evelyn Reed, Women and the Family: A Historical View.

Evelyn Sullerot, Women, Society and Change, Ch. 2.

Angela Davis, "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," The Black Scholar, December, 1971.

E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Family in the U.S.
Philip Aries, Centuries of Childhood, selections.

II. The Function of The Family in America Today

Discussion will center on the specific functions of the American family, woman's role in it, and what would happen if any of these functions were assumed by other institutions.

Functions of the family include:

1. Household maintenance
2. Consumption: family as main buying unit
3. Family as property-owning unit
4. Inheritance of property
5. Reproduction
6. Sexuality
7. Socialization of children
8. Reinforcement of workers' "loyalty and stability" on their jobs

Readings:

Women's Collective, "Black Women in Revolt," Monthly Review, October, 1972

Juliet Mitchell, Woman's Estate, Ch. 5-8

Margaret Benston, The Political Economy of Women's Liberation.

Maria Rosa Dela Costa, "Women and the Subversion of the Community," RA, Vol. 6, No. 1.

Limda Gordon, Families, New England Free Press.

Gerda Lerner, Black Women in White America.

III. Effects of the Family on Women's Lives

Comparison and contrast of women's experiences in different jobs, incomes and family situations; how women deal with family responsibilities and common problems. Special difficulties of single/widowed/divorced/separated women with children at home. Problems of welfare mothers. Effects of the welfare system on family structure. Similarities and differences in problems facing working class and middle class women.

Readings:

Juliet Mitchell, Woman's Estate, pp. 159-166.

Florence Rush, "Women in the Middle," Notes from the Third Year.

Carol Glassman, "Women and the Welfare System," Sisterhood is Powerful, ed. Robin Morgan.

Joann Clark, "Motherhood," The Black Woman, ed. Toni Cade.

M. Komarovskiy, Blue Collar Marriage, ch. 3.

Doris Lessing, "To Room 19" A Man and Two Women.
Films: Salt of the Earth.

IV. Future Direction of the Family

Recent social attempts to deal with some of the changes in the family.

Readings:

V. Breitbart and B. Leman, "The Women who Take Care of Children; Why Child Care," Up from Under, Jan. 1971.

D. Babcox, "The Liberation of Children," Liberation Now!

Slide Show: Sex Roles in Children's Media.

"WOMEN'S ROLES" AND HOW OUR CULTURE

REINFORCES THEM

Discussion of women's images and stereotypes in our society; how these images reinforce what women think about themselves and how they act; the place of women in major institutions and women as consumers.

I. Images and Myths about Women

Readings:

Boston Women's Health Collective, Women and Their Bodies, pp. 38-46.

II. How Institutions Reinforce Images of Women

Readings:

"Women's Servitude Under the Law," Law Against the People.

Jo Freeman, Building of the Gilded Cage," Notes from the Third Year.

Marion Meade, "On the Trail of the Liberated T.V. Heroine," Aphra, Spring 1971.

Naomi Weisstein, "Psychology Constructs the Female," Liberation Now!

"Women and the Church," Off our Backs, March 6, '71

III. The Relationship between these Images and Women as Consumers

Readings:

"Media Images I and II," Sisterhood is Powerful.

Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, ch. 9.

E. Willis, "Consumerism and Women" Voices from Women's Liberation.

IV. How Images and Stereotypes Divide Women

A discussion about whether these images fit all women. Are the stereotypes a true picture of women? How do these images make us feel about ourselves? What good are they? How can women begin to change some of the stereotypes that limit us?

Readings:

Toni Cade, "On the Issue of Roles," The Black Women. Liberation Now!, ed. Madeline Belkin

Debby D'Amico, "To My White Working Class Sisters."

Ellen Maslow, "Storybook Lives: Growing up Middle Class."

NOTE: The course originally had a page detailing the background and experiences of the women who'd be involved in teaching the course. For further information contact:

New York Women's Labor Project

26 W. 90th Street

New York, N. Y. 10024 212-724-9946.■

female culture is us

Frances Pilot-Goodstein and Marie Oommen, Cambridge, Ma.

What is female culture? Female culture is one sided. How can men know what the female experience is?

Historically, man's un-knowledge of the female experience has made us invisible. Mystic, not actual. We are invisible, unless we wear man-made masks. We live invisible within male culture. We conform to male made images of ourselves, if we wish to survive and be seen at all.

Are we superior? Are we the bulwarks? The mothers of great men. We stand like karyatids, holding up fragile, male culture. It's a lot of responsibility to always be there with someone else's safety pin in your handbag. We're supposed to be so strong, that when things go wrong, the columnar foundation of cement women can take the beatings, rapes, and killings. I don't want to be a cement woman. Cement women cannot fly or even walk or bleed. And I want movement. So, before I harden completely, I'm stepping out from under their temple. Let it fall on their heads.

We are trying to become visible. We don't want to be defined in terms of our relationship to a Greek temple. We want to act out our own images of ourselves, independent of male culture. I will not be tied to a temple.

Female culture is largely unrecorded. What is recorded, is fragmented. I have to dig my identity out of a chaos of images. I am an archeologist.

I am beginning to discover female culture in art, literature, and life. For me, female culture is my eighty-four year old grandmother serving tea, Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Arden makeup, lace underpants, Anais Nin, and tampons. I'll throw out or keep whatever I want. I want to dig for identity within this culture, I don't exist at all in male culture, so it would be a useless search to dig there.

We are more than the functional mechanism of male culture. We are tired of having the tea drunk, the children grow up, the makeup washed off, Charlotte Bronte read with Charles Dickens, and the tampons flushed away. Everything we do seems to disappear. Serving others wears you out, I want to serve myself and a few friends. Let the tampons collect in an odorous pile till a new efficiency of structure emerges. I refuse to exhaust myself covering up my own tracks.

We are not ashamed of our footsteps. We do not want our tracks erased. We want to study and document our experience in our way. We want to plan our own schools, writing, and lives, not always have it planned for us. We are a cultural mainstream. We are half of humanity.

"Female culture is, and we are it."

Female culture is the art of the everyday, the arrangement of personal beauty, of home, of environment, and of relationships. It will supply the spirituality that technology lacks. It is not the stratified dictates of mass culture. It is anti-mass, anti-the mediocre, the mundane.

We need to document Female Culture as Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth Gould Davis, and Adrienne Rich suggest "...the necessity for a new and demanding kind of critical scholarship - a searching re-evaluation of the 'respectable' sources as well as of neglected ones, undertaken in the light of feminist perceptions." We need to reconstruct and redefine disciplines with a Feminist perspective and to correct purposeful misconceptions.

We demand that art not be high but our daily experience. We demand that the "artistic" not create off the backs of others. We demand an artistic life, not art. We assert that Female Culture is and we are it !!!!!

"We" are in the seminar "Forms of Female Expression" working towards an M.A. degree in Feminist Studies at Cambridge-Goddard Graduate School for Social Change, 5 Upland Road, Cambridge, Mass. Please join us in documenting Female Culture and do please share your ideas and work with us.■



Lyn Jones, Kansas City

BURN WITCH, BURN

Barbara Ehrenreich & Deirdre English, Oyster Bay, N.Y.

WITCHES, MIDWIVES, AND NURSES
A History of Women Healers
is available from
Glass Mountain Pamphlets
P.O. Box 238, Oyster Bay, N.Y.

Witches lived and were burned long before the development of modern medical technology. The great majority of them were lay healers serving the peasant population, and their suppression marks one of the opening struggles in the history of man's suppression of women as healers.

The other side of the suppression of witches as healers was the creation of a new male medical profession, under the protection and patronage of the ruling classes. This new European medical profession played an important role in the witch-hunts, supporting the witches' persecutors with "medical" reasoning:

... Because the Medieval Church, with the support of kings, princes, and secular authorities, controlled medical education and practice, the inquisition (witch-hunts) constitutes, among other things, an early instance of the "professional" repudiating the skills and interfering with the rights of the "nonprofessional" to minister to the poor. (Thomas Szasz, The Manufacture of Madness.)

The witch-hunts left a lasting effect: An aspect of the female has ever since been associated with the witch, and an aura of contamination has remained--especially around the midwife and other women healers. This early and devastating exclusion of women from independent healing roles was a violent precedent and a warning: It was to become a theme of our history. The women's health movement of today has ancient roots in the medieval covens, and its opponents have as their ancestors those who ruthlessly forced the elimination of witches.

The Witch Craze

The age of witch-hunting spanned more than four centuries, (from the 14th to the 17th century,) in its sweep from Germany to England. It was born in feudalism and lasted--gaining in virulence--well into "the age of reason." The witch craze took different forms at different times and places, but never lost its essential character: that of a ruling class campaign of terror directed against the female peasant population. Witches represented a political, religious, and sexual threat to the Protestant and Catholic churches alike, as well as to the state.

The extent of the witch craze is startling: In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries there were thousands upon thousands of executions--usually live burnings at the stake--in Germany, Italy, and other countries. In the mid-sixteenth century the terror spread to France and finally to England. Many writers have estimated the total number killed to have been in the millions. Women made up some 85% of those executed--old women, young women, children.

Their scope alone suggests that the witch hunts represent a deep-seated social phenomenon which goes far beyond the history of medicine. In locale and timing, the most virulent witch hunts were associated with periods of great social upheaval shaking feudalism at its roots--mass peasant uprisings and conspiracies, the beginnings of capitalism and the rise of Protestantism. There is fragmentary evidence--which feminists ought to follow up--suggesting that in some areas witchcraft represented a female-led peasant rebellion.

Unfortunately, the witch herself--poor and illiterate--did not leave us her story. It was recorded, like all history, by the educated elite, so that today we know the witch only through the eyes of her persecutors.

Two of the most common theories of the witch hunts are basically medical interpretations, attributing the witch craze to unexplainable outbreaks of mass hysteria. One version has it that the peasantry went mad. According to this, the witch craze was an epidemic of mass hatred and panic cast in images of a blood-lusty peasant mob bearing flaming torches. Another psychiatric interpretation holds that the witches themselves were insane.

But, in fact, the witch craze was neither a lynching party nor a mass suicide by hysterical women. Rather, it followed well-ordered, legalistic procedures, initiated, financed, and executed by the church and state. To Catholic and Protestant witch-hunters alike, the unquestioned authority on how to conduct a witch hunt was the Malleus Maleficarum, or Hammer of Witches, written in 1484 by the Reverends Kramer and Sprenger (the "beloved sons" of Pope Innocent VII). For three centuries this sadistic book lay on the bench of every judge, every witch-hunter. In a long section on judicial proceedings, the instructions make it clear how the "hysteria" was set off.

The job of initiating a witch trial was to be performed by either the Vicar (priest) or Judge of the County. Anyone failing to report a witch faced both excommunication and a long list of temporal punishments.

The trial of one exposed witch could be used to unearth several more. Kramer and Sprenger gave detailed instructions about the use of tortures to force confessions and further accusations. Commonly, the accused was stripped naked and shaved of all her body hair, then subjected to thumbscrews and the rack, spikes and bone-crushing "boots," starvation and beatings.

The Crimes of the Witches

Who were the witches, then, and what were their

"crimes" that could arouse such vicious upper class suppression? Undoubtedly, over the centuries of witch hunting, the charge of "witchcraft" came to cover a multitude of sins ranging from political subversion and religious heresy to lewdness and blasphemy. But three central accusations emerge repeatedly in the history of witchcraft throughout northern Europe: First, witches are accused of every conceivable sexual crime against men. Quite simply, they are "accused" of female sexuality. Second, they are accused of being organized. Third, they are accused of having magical powers affecting health--of harming, but also of healing. They were often charged specifically with possessing medical and obstetrical skills.

First, consider the charge of sexual crimes. The medieval Catholic Church elevated sexism to a point of principle: The Malleus declares, "When a woman thinks alone, she thinks evil." The misogyny of the Church, if not proved by the witch craze itself, is demonstrated by its teaching that in intercourse the male deposits in the female a homunculus, or "little person," complete with soul, which is simply housed in the womb for nine months, without acquiring any attributes of the mother. The homunculus is not really safe, however, until it reaches male hands again, when a priest baptizes it, ensuring the salvation of its immortal soul.

The Church associated women with sex, and all pleasure in sex was condemned, because it could only come from copulation with the devil (despite the icy-cold organ he was reputed to possess) and they in turn infected men. Lust in either man or wife, then, was blamed on the female. On the other hand, witches were accused of making men impotent and of causing their penises to disappear. As for female sexuality, witches were accused, in effect, of giving contraceptive aid and of performing abortions:

In the eyes of the Church, all the witches' power was ultimately derived from her sexuality. Her career began with sexual intercourse with the devil. Each witch was confirmed at a general meeting (the witches' Sabbath) at which the devil presided, often in the form of a goat, and had intercourse with the neophytes. In return for her powers, the witch promised to serve him faithfully.



Nina Sabaroff, Portland, Ore.

Not only were the witches women--they were women who seemed to be organized into an enormous secret society. A witch who was a proved member of the "Devil's Party" was more dreadful than one who had acted alone, and the witch-hunting literature is obsessed with the question of what went on at the witches' "Sabbaths."

In fact, there is evidence that women accused of being witches did meet locally in small groups and that these groups came together in crowds of hundreds or thousands on festival days. Some writers speculate that the meetings were occasions for pagan religious worship. Undoubtedly the meetings were also occasions for trading herbal lore and passing on the news. We have little evidence about the political significance of the witches' organizations, but it's hard to imagine that they weren't connected to the peasant rebellions of the time.

Witches as Healers

We come now to the most fantastic accusation of all: The witch is accused not only of murdering and poisoning, sex crimes and conspiracy--but of helping and healing. As a leading English witch-hunter put it:

For this must always be remembered, as a conclusion, that by witches we understand not only those which kill and torment, but all Diviners, Charmers, Jugglers, all Wizards, commonly called wise men and wise women. . . and in the same number we reckon all good Witches, which do no hurt but good, which do not spoil and destroy, but save and deliver. . . It were a thousand times better for the land if all Witches, but especially the blessing Witch, might suffer death.

Witch-healers were often the only general medical practitioners for a people who had no doctors and no hospitals and who were bitterly afflicted with poverty and disease. In particular, the association of the witch and the midwife was strong: "No one does more harm to the Catholic Church than midwives," wrote witch-hunters Kramer and Sprenger.

When faced with the misery of the poor, the Church turned to the dogma that experience in this world is fleeting and unimportant. But there was a double standard at work, for the Church was not against medical care for the upper class. Kings and nobles had their court physicians who were men, sometimes even priests. The real issue was control: Male upper class healing under the auspices of the Church was acceptable; female healing as part of a peasant subculture was not.

The church saw its attack on peasant healers as an attack on magic, not medicine. The devil was believed to have real power on earth, and the use of that power by peasant women--whether for good or evil--was frightening to the Church and State. The greater their satanic powers to help themselves, the less they were dependent on God and the Church and the more they were potentially able to use their powers against God's order. Magic charms were thought to be at least as effective as prayer in healing the sick, but prayer was Church-sanctioned and controlled while incantations and charms were not.

The wise woman, or witch, had a host of remedies which had been tested in years of use. Many of the herbal remedies developed by witches still have their place in modern pharmacology. They had pain-killers, digestive aids and anti-inflammatory agents. They used ergot for the pain of labor at a time when the Church held that pain in labor was the Lord's just punishment for Eve's original sin. Ergot derivatives are the principal drugs used today to hasten labor and aid in the recovery from childbirth. Belladonna--still used today as an anti-spasmodic--was used by the witch-healers to inhibit uterine contractions when miscarriage threatened. Digitalis, still an important drug in treating heart ailments, is said to have been discovered by an English witch. Undoubtedly many of the witches' other remedies were purely magical and owed their effectiveness--if they had any--to their reputation.

The witch-healer's methods were as great a threat (to the Catholic Church, if not the Protestant) as her results, for the witch was an empiricist: she relied on her senses rather than on faith or doctrine, she believed in trial and error, cause and effect. Her attitude was not religiously passive, but actively inquiring. She trusted her ability to find ways to deal with disease, pregnancy and childbirth--whether through medications or charms. In short; her magic was the science of her time.

The Church, by contrast, was deeply anti-empirical. It discredited values of the material world, and had a profound distrust of the senses. There was no point in looking for natural laws that govern physical phenomena, for the world is created anew by God in every instant. The senses are the devil's playground, the arena into which he will try to lure men away from Faith and into the conceits of the intellect or the delusions of carnality.

In the persecution of the witch, the anti-empiricist and the misogynist, anti-sexual obsessions of the Church coincide. Empiricism and sexuality both represent a surrender to the senses, a betrayal of faith. The witch was a triple threat to the Church--she was a woman, and not ashamed of it. She appeared to be part of an organized underground of peasant women. And she was a healer whose practice was based in empirical study. In the face of the repressive fatalism of Christianity, she held out the hope of change in this world.

The Suppression of Women Healers

The establishment of medicine as a profession, requiring university training, made it easy to bar women legally from practice. With few exceptions, the universities were closed to women (even to upper class women who could afford them), and licensing laws were established to prohibit all but university-trained doctors from practice. It was impossible to enforce the licensing laws consistently since there was only a handful of university-trained doctors compared to the great mass of lay healers. But the laws could be used selectively. Their first target was not the peasant healer, but the better off, literate woman

healer who competed for the same urban clientele as that of the university-trained doctors.

Take, for example, the case of Jacoba Felicie, brought to trial in 1322 by the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Paris, on charges of illegal practice. Jacoba was literate and had received some unspecified "special training" in medicine. That her patients were well off is evident from the fact that (as they testified in court) they had consulted well-known university-trained physicians before turning to her. Six witnesses affirmed that Jacoba had cured them, even after numerous doctors had given up, and one patient declared that she was wiser in the art of surgery and medicine than any master physician or surgeon in Paris. But these testimonials were used against her, for the charge was not that she was incompetent, but that--as a woman--she dared to cure at all.

Along the same lines, English physicians sent a petition to Parliament bemoaning the "worthless and presumptuous women who usurped the profession" and asking the imposition of fines and "long imprisonment" on any woman who attempted to "use the practice of Fisyk." By the 14th century, the medical profession's campaign against urban, educated women healers was virtually complete throughout Europe. Male doctors had won a clear monopoly over the practice of medicine among the upper classes (except for obstetrics, which remained the province of female midwives even among the upper classes for another three centuries.) They were ready to take on a key role in the elimination of the great mass of female healers--the "witches."

The partnership between Church, State and medical profession reached full bloom in the witch trials. The doctor was held up the medical "expert," giving an aura of science to the whole proceeding. He was asked to make judgments about whether certain women were witches and whether certain afflictions had been caused by witchcraft. In the witch-hunts, the Church explicitly legitimized the doctors' professionalism, denouncing non-professional healing as equivalent to heresy: "If a woman dare to cure without having studied she is a witch and must die." (Of course, there wasn't any way for a woman to study.) Finally, the witch craze provided a handy excuse for the doctor's failings in everyday practice: anything he couldn't cure was obviously the result of sorcery.

The distinction between "female" superstition and "male" medicine was made final by the very roles of the doctor and the witch at the trial. The trial in one stroke established the male physician on a moral and intellectual plane vastly above the female healer he was called to judge. It placed him on the side of God and Law, a professional on par with lawyers and theologians, while it placed her on the side of darkness, evil, and magic. He owed his new status not to medical or scientific achievements of his own, but to the Church and State he served so well.

The real answer is not in this made-up drama of science versus ignorance and superstition. It's part of the 19th century's long story of class and sex struggles for power in all areas of life.■

UP AGAINST THE MALL

In November, 1972, some members of the Baltimore Feminist Project went shopping at the Mall in Columbia, Maryland. Each person then wrote her own analysis of the experience.



Linda Plotkin, Iemont, Pa.

Mary Jane Lupton

We stopped at Woodward and Lothrop's cosmetics displays where a harvest of juices and creams lay open to be tried. Evelyn and Mary Jane applied Jovan's musk oil: "It releases the animal instinct." Emily tried lunar white eye-shadow to combat "that haggard look." Karen sprayed on some perfume that smelled like toilet disinfectant. One cosmetic, Gelstick, claimed that it would "warm your skin with a tawny radiantly healthy glow," at which point Mary Jane commented that lead-based makeup killed many young women and contributed to the decline of Rome. Emily remarked that in the Renaissance women went blind from belladonna which had a cosmetic use for dilating the eye.

Next in the men's budget clothing store, Evelyn and Karen asked the salesman if the majority of his customers were men or women. "Women," he answered. "Men are out working during the day. Women don't have anything to do, so they grab their husband's charge-a-plate and spend, starting at 9:30 in the morning." (Later Judy wryly commented that the store doesn't even open until ten.)

We went to one store, called Toys for Men, where such sexist boy's-toys as Playmate puzzles and a "Women's Lib Survival Kit" were sold. Games included Seduction, Couples, and Adultery. Most of their covers pictured nude women; all the games had similar formats. Seduction, for example, is a game for two men and two women. Each player is called a Lover; the moves are a series of rendez-vous with the member of the Opposite Sex being pursued by a Lover. The Males have blue cards, the Females, pink. One male card reads: "Sorry, she said no again last night. Move your token to the Chastity space on your path." These games are not only sexually exploitative but also expensive. For example, Adultery sells for \$7.99.

Our last store was Frederick's which features such items as padded girdles, wigs, G-strings, pasties, open-crotch panties, nightgowns and lingerie. Emily, Evelyn, and Karen got into a wig-trying trip. At this point Carola got upset, because she thought we were making fun of the saleswomen and of the values of working-class women. She walked out; we soon followed.

Usually when I go shopping I feel insecure, and I know I'm not going to fit any of the clothes that the culture keeps telling me I should buy. I get my slacks at men's stores or at Lane Bryant because I'm very tall.

It was good shopping with feminists. I felt like no one could hurt me, that we weren't accepting what the male capitalists produce for women consumers. We were rather obnoxious at times, but I felt I was getting revenge at last. I do feel sympathy for the saleswomen who are forced, because they have to survive, into pushing cosmetics and pasties. My first job was as a salesgirl at Woolworth's when I was sixteen. I earned 45 cents an hour for selling goldfish and girdles. I still like shopping at Woolworth's, because who can feel guilty in a dime store?

Carola Norton



I never went shopping with a friend, so the whole giggling thing was alien to me.

I used to enjoy shopping. I had my mother's money, and I used to be a small size. Now even though I'm still a small person, I'm no size. I used to think I was an unattractive person, but everything I tried on in the store made me feel better. Now I feel I look okay, until I walk into the store and see all the mirrors and new things and I start feeling shabby. I'm afraid of people seeing the holes in my underwear when I try on clothes. I'm intimidated by the saleswomen and customers, and yet I like them. I like to smile and talk and share things (like isn't that a nice color, aren't things shoddy and expensive this year) to

overcome the phony barriers of all these things and appearances that separate us. I feel the mockery that our group expressed increased the barriers.

About class: within the working class there are different incomes, lifestyles, and types of work. I would think breaking down those barriers within our class is what we, as political people, would be trying to do. I don't think we did it at the Mall. Out of our defensiveness, protected by being in a group, we made a show of being able to be above all this.

Particularly in Frederick's we were laughing at things that we might have thought of as "bad taste" in the old days. And I felt that that element of "bad taste" snobbery remained in us. We were taking objects that a woman in another segment of the working class might treasure, and we were ridiculing them, thus emphasizing the difference between her and us, instead of the things we have in common.

Brenda Brienza



I spent most of the morning trying to emulate the women I was with, trying to "play their game" rather than deal with my own feelings.

The other women acted freaked-out: "Oh wow!" etc. But I do all my shopping here, because it's close to home and therefore the least time-consuming way to shop; I did not feel freaked-out.

Something Peg Bracken said in The I Hate Hate to Housekeep Book reflects my attitude: "I've noticed something else: if you conscientiously prepare and apply your face as the beauty people tell you to do--and I have tried this--you spend 9000% more time at it than usual, but you look only 6% better." I scorn make-up for political reasons, but to a large extent, practicality is my motivation.

A basic feminist tenet, I feel, is that we are all victims of our society; yet what we were doing at the

Mall was denying our situation and laughing at "them." Not until we come to appreciate the "them" as "us" can we begin to explore implications of buying and consumerism.

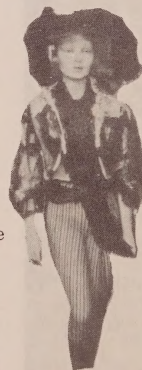
Judy Markowitz



When I shop I can never believe that women think that product "X" will make them beautiful and alluring overnight. But the fact remains that, for most women, including feminists, our personhood is defined by how we look. Our survival in a sexist society depends on being "attractive"--it is one of our jobs as women. The frightening reality of women's lives is that we must consume to be "respectable." And so the sight of the so-called "suburban middle-class wife" en masse in the Mall did not upset me. Since I know that few diversions exist for women of any life-style, I cannot fault women for seeking some outlet in our otherwise solitary lives.

The horror of this shopping trip was the overabundance of male-oriented items which used women in a most degrading way: 1) a dieter's calendar showing a heavy, nude woman with a different pose for each month (Who would buy such an item? A husband to remind his wife to stay in shape! What a rape of the mind.) 2) the game Adultery, with a nude (attractive) woman on the cover being ogled by a fully-clothed (not so attractive) male even though the rules apply equally to men and women; 3) a trash can adorned with several posed, nude women--what better place to deposit garbage than into the empty shell of a naked female; or 4) several large jig-saw puzzles of nude women; how exciting to put together and take apart, at will, a woman. (What a male fantasy!)

Emily Toth



I used to have spells of adolescent blues. I'd be told, "Get yourself a new dress--then you'll feel better." So I associated shopping with uplift.

Now I realize shopping is a microcosm for the general condition of women. We're not taken seriously: we're expected to give our time and energy to ornamentation and frivolity, to our bodies and not our minds; we're expected to feel fulfilled with bright new goods instead of social power.

Men's departments tend to be small, drab, functional. Men are involved with the serious work of life: no frills. Women's departments are a dazzling peacock variety of colors and displays. Men's departments appeal to reason: women's to emotion and impulse. Cosmetics departments are toylands: one can try out new identities with new, colorful make-ups. Play is unnecessary, but it fills a woman's time, while emptying her purse.

If women are beautiful, they reflect credit on the men who "own" them. Beauty is associated with artifice, for a woman's natural self is never beautiful enough. Hence there are cosmetics to change our faces and bodies, including our odors; underclothes to change our bodily configurations.

Shopping for women represents an alienation from ourselves. It requires us to contemplate ourselves as objects: since we can never be entirely beautiful, we are eternally dissatisfied. It represents our living for others, for the esteem attached to our public face. And shopping shows how really powerless we are. If we controlled our own lives and money, we'd have more important things to do.

Karen Baker Mitzner



I have had a love-hate relationship with "women's culture" all my life. I have loved pretty things, bright colors, textures, and sweet smells. But I have also resented them deeply. So much energy in my life has been wasted on girdling, spraying, painting, dieting, and agonizing over my "ugliness." After I became involved in the women's movement, I deliberately ignored my appearance because I wanted to get over my preoccupation with it.

I eventually got up the courage to ride a bicycle and to start to relate to my body in a new way: that is, from the inside-out. As I began to feel better physically, I actually started to like myself for the first time in my life. I resented all

pretty clothing because it reminded me of the society's, and my own, obsession with appearance. I had particularly strong resentment towards women's clothing that restricts movement and accentuates breasts, buttocks, and thighs. And I resented most of all the figure standards as defined by models and mannequins--slender, muscleless, weak bodies. Beauty standards weaken a woman's self-esteem and create competitiveness with other women; and the doll-like quality (the only constant on the beauty scene) of the fashionable image keeps her weak and passive physically. I amounts to control, psychologically and physically.

But I have also discovered that there are good things about women's culture. This discovery was only possible after I allowed my body to "come into its own"--exercised and with a full compliment of body hair. I like myself and I like other women too. I can appreciate the fact that we women are in touch with our emotions, with our inner life. And elements of women's culture have traditionally been used to express feelings, for example, the expression of mood with color and style. I have come to think that clothing that might not be appropriate for ordinary wear has a place as "costume" for special occasions. I was the only person who bought anything on the shopping trip--unbeautiful, but wonderful shoes with sole supports inside and thick soles outside--perfect for hiking--soul supports!

Evelyn Freedland Mazo



We are all victims. The lure of consumerism has touched most of our lives. I felt the Mall was geared to women; and in the hierarchical power structure manifest in the Mall, women wait on women and function seductively to part us from our money and ultimately from each other.

For me our experience in the restaurant was an epiphany of this. When we did such simple things as passing a plate or agreeing to have all orders on one check, the waitress was reduced to being grateful. In a place geared to women, one woman acted in a subservient role to other women. But this is a false distinction. Women are equally joined in caste; waitresses, saleswomen, middle-class moneyed women are all women.

In growing toward personhood, I recognize that by applying external things to myself, I say nothing positive. The message is instead, I don't fit, something is abnormal about me--the pants are too tight, the "in" color makes me look the color of vomit. My most liberated moments have been when I'm so involved in ideas and process that I "forget" to match jeans and top, have dirty hair and no make-up. The energy consumed in buying can be more joyously spent in being.■

WOMAN V

for my mother

well-lubricated facial lined
veins rising on backs of yr hands
that front tooth still yellowing
a new hair rinse too black
but covering the gray all the same

you draw circles w/ yr feet
sitting in church, fanning yr
face w/ a chorus book. you,
mother, wondering if yr
daughters are happy

you, mother, bleeding so much of yr life
away, preserving the rest w/ oils,
yr wide orange eyes stare past
yr husband's speaking. are you happy, you
wonder, are my daughters happy do they
love me do they love me

Sharon Ulrich, Berkeley, Ca.

a radical perspective on WOMEN'S STUDIES

Marilyn Webb, Plainfield, Vt. © 1973

The women's movement and American Universities represent contradictory traditions of goals, priorities, and values, yet recently overlaps have been forced by the emergence of feminist studies programs. Often these programs are the only centers of feminist struggle in a city, so they become crucial internal and external battlegrounds.

Basic to our system of higher education are competitiveness, ranking, and vertical authorities. This is precisely the antithesis of feminism. I assume that the ultimate goal of a feminist revolution is the elimination of hierarchical rule, most especially where authority over others is a birth right because of biology (your sex, or who your parents were). Where feminists would build collectively, universities would divide by competitiveness and grade hierarchies. Where feminists would build group solidarity, universities try to create an intellectual pseudo-elite whose social status, but not real power, is meant to be above those who don't have a B.A.

Because of this double-edged sword called higher education, we feminists must be particularly attuned to the uses of knowledge: does it oppress other women rather than contribute to their strength? I believe, to combat this, that feminist studies programs should be more closely tuned to an on-going feminist movement than to the university. Of late this has become difficult because what was initially a raging militant and organized force has since dispersed, although feminists lurk behind every door.

What Does Feminist Studies Teach?

Feminist studies comes from a different place than most departments or programs in colleges. Feminism is a philosophy of knowing, not another topic or subject for investigation, but a total world view. We have an analysis, as well as a direction for change. In formulating our challenge against a system of power antagonistic to our values we need to do two things: 1) learn about our condition and recapture an identity out of our colonized state, and 2) avoid hierarchical distinctions between us, as an example of a new society we plan to create.

In feminist studies programs each woman should learn the historical, literary, biological and psycho-

logical roots of our collective colonization. From this I think she'll begin to formulate perspectives on what female nature is and could be. Because we have been isolated, we have not until recently become aware of the existence of a female cultural identity: a collective history that we share.

Because feminism is concerned with the forms and functions of power and how it's been wielded, feminist philosophy cuts across the so-called "disciplines." It includes psychology (individual/group, colonizer/colonized), sociology (social forms of power and class development), biology (is there such a thing as biological inferiority?), and of course a new study of history from the bottom up, as well as literature and the arts. All of this study, however, takes place in a wholly different context. It is the history of what was created both by the dominated and the dominator to struggle against or sustain that domination. I don't feel that any body of knowledge is more or less relevant to feminist curricula; the important things are how to look at that knowledge, what questions we ask of it, and how it is useful for an understanding of our own struggle.

This becomes more than an academic exercise. It's a training for more astute actions today, as well as looking at the past. It's learning from others' mistakes. We must begin to make the academic questions personal: what are the intersections of the individual (us) and the historical moment (our times)? What are the myths that blind us today? What are the boundaries of action?

How We Teach and Learn

The way we teach has as much to do with the continuation of authority systems and a ruling class model of the world as what we teach. When we teach about sexual politics, it's class hierarchy we are attacking. If we recreate this same division within our teaching, our ideas are devoid of form. We just continue the notion that those at the top must remain unchallenged, while those at the bottom must consider themselves insignificant at the feet of those enlightened few.

The other day I visited a class on women's labor history in New England. The woman teaching it had done extensive research, but when she presented the information she was unapproachable. She gave a long very knowledgeable two hour lecture, then fielded questions expertly, and in the process insulted people's intelligence for not having done the research she'd done, for wasting her time with meaningless questions, etc. When pressed to discuss what her presentation meant for our movement, she refused to comment. This was scholarly research about women, but done in the aristocratic tradition of class society, one of whose rituals involves humiliating those in a lower class. This is not what we want to accomplish in a feminist studies program.

At one time radicals said the only good classes were group discussions. I don't believe that anymore. Sometimes lectures are the quickest and most concise way to communicate information. I think the

women

A Journal of Liberation

announces volume III

Encouraged by the growth and spirit of the women's movement, WOMEN: A Journal of Liberation goes into its third volume of publication. Since the Journal was started in the Fall of 1969, it has served as an expression of the ideas and creativity of a developing women's consciousness. We feel our magazine fills two purposes: to introduce women to our movement, and to further dialogue among women who are working for revolutionary change in our society. Our thematic format allows for an in-depth exploration of various problems and issues facing us.



Glenda Jones

We are a group of fifteen women who work together collectively. We share all aspects of producing the Journal and are as committed to this process as to its end result. Our method of working together requires time; each issue takes several months to complete. There is a diversity of political opinion and lifestyle among us, but we are all committed to an autonomous women's movement and to fundamental social change to eliminate sexism, classism, racism, and imperialism.

We are able to continue producing the Journal because of the many women around the country who share their work and ideas with us. We welcome material (artwork, photography, articles, fiction and poetry) generally related to the themes for Volume III. Articles should be limited to 5,000 words or less.

Themes for Volume III

1. SEXUALITY

Women have begun to write about our sexuality and it's a topic that we need to explore more deeply. Has our women's consciousness led us to think about sexuality/sensuality in a different way? How do we think about our bodies, in terms of physical expression, movement, strength, and appearance? Do we find possibilities for growth in our present sexual relationships? Out of the turmoil of challenging ourselves about monogamy, lesbianism, and heterosexuality, have we reached new conclusions? How have we internalized the repressive morality of our society? How are we demystifying the romance/love/sex syndrome and what happens to our relationships when we do? How do we understand and protect ourselves from rape and sexual exploitation? How do we analyze prostitution? Submit material by May 1, 1972.

2. BUILDING A WOMEN'S CULTURE

A women's culture is emerging from the new values of the women's movement. Symbols of our woman-identified women's culture are: women's presses, theater groups; rock bands, art and film collectives, and women's studies programs. We would like articles describing such projects. As we challenge the dominant culture, we are finding new forms of creativity and are rediscovering traditions which we once considered "unliberated," such as crafts and child-rearing. Women are achieving autonomy by living together and by developing skills. How does the women's culture relate to the counter-culture as a whole? How do we challenge the dominant culture? What is the significance of what we're building? In addition to articles, we'd like to print lots of artwork, photos, poetry and fiction in this issue. Submit material by Sept. 1, 1972.

3. WOMEN LOCKED-UP

In this issue, we will focus on the physical and psychological imprisonment of women as carried out by such institutions as prisons, mental institutions, old age homes, the church and schools. We'd like first-hand accounts of what happens to women in these and related institutions. We'd like analyses of how these institutions oppress women and why. What is madness? What is crime? How are women affected by our society's definition of these? What projects are women involved in, such as half-way houses, prison projects, and high school groups, which relate to women trapped by these institutions? What alternatives are women developing to release women from the oppression of these institutions? What ideas do we have for eliminating such institutions in a future society? Submit material by Jan. 1, 1973.

4. ALL KINDS OF WOMEN

Beyond the white middle-class core of the American women's movement, how do other women struggle for survival and liberation? The lives of third-world, foreign, ethnic, older, and poor women will be the theme of this issue. Submit material by 6/15/73.

Back Issues

Vol. I

1. Inherent Nature or Cultural Conditioning?
2. What is Liberation? Abortion, Birth Control, Jobs, Education, Self-Defense
3. Women in History
4. Women in Revolution

Vol. II

1. Women in the Arts
2. How We Live and With Whom
3. Women as Workers Under Capitalism
4. The Power and Scope of the Women's Movement

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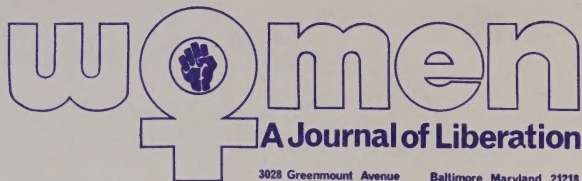
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antagonism to lecturing was that the lecturer wasn't around enough to become a real person. There was never an exchange between people. And because most students coming through our school systems have already developed a negative set of responses to lectures and "teachers," acting differently in this role is not easy. On the other hand, learning is an idea that grows organically from the politics of the women's movement. Instead of setting up a class with one teacher and many students, we could have a collective of women that might include students, non-students, those called teachers, and other "specialists" in specific information (like welfare law, or medical skills). All these resource people could plan a course together and teach as a group. This diffuses authority and allows for vital conversation as well as information.

Vast differences between feminist programs exist in colleges. In the elite schools programs are highly academic and scholarly in nature. Rather than placing a priority on study leading to action for the benefit of all women, female studies is wide open turf for critical articles on such things as a new look at Jane Austen, images of women in European literature, plus more specifically useful research on things like female sexuality and psychology. Students at those schools only rarely come into contact with working or poor women's lives. In state schools working women or their daughters are the students. They are the community, and don't have to go out of their way to relate to it. Feminist studies programs there are very different: more political, more skills-oriented, more service-oriented, more about things like welfare law, people's history, and education. But some integration must be made between these two because all that's happening is a repeat of the existing class structure. Elite schools should fashion their programs to include time spent in places where many women unlike their students are: factories, prisons, state mental hospitals, telephone company, etc.

Our Problems

By the time students come near feminist studies, they already know how to give the teacher what she wants, and how to make just enough separation between the information they are learning and their lives. They learned long ago that they can't afford to be vulnerable or honest in a classroom. Those of us who are now teaching, especially those who came to the university through the women's movement rather than through the university structures, have tried to use the consciousness-raising techniques in our classes at first. These definitely don't work. Students want you to tell them something; they don't want to be honest before you are well-tested. Hence a crucial dilemma. Whereas you see feminism as a world view, you are lucky if they even do all the reading. I don't know what to do about this. The way I've resolved it is to separate myself some, as well. I am unfortunately thrust in the role of teacher. At first I fought it, but now the best I can hope for is to use some of that authority to create a climate of challenged ease. I don't want us to simply loll around, feeling high that we are women, and not help each other to grow; but I don't want to be a repository of

endless information, either. "Beneficent leader" is the best I've been able to come up with.

The current political and economic conditions make for another pitfall. It's hard to be engaged in any kind of political struggle of late, most especially while in school. One thing that's added to this where I am is the University Without Walls concept: students come to the campus only for short periods of time: two weeks, three months, or something in between. The rest of the time they do independent study somewhere else. This completely disperses any political action on a campus. Any organizing that happens is short lived and usually powerless. The administration has total control by the sheer weight of continuity.

Yet a third pitfall is the one of separating feminist studies within the university. On the one hand, a separate program provides the space and experimental freedom to develop something new. On the other hand, it relieves the larger institution of pressure for more feminism in literature, history, or other departments. It gets the unenlightened college community off the hook. And usually the feminist budget is miniscule as compared with other university budgets. We are bought off for very little. Because we have so few funds, and because we want to represent as many feminist viewpoints and share what money we have as widely as possible, we pay ourselves and each other very little. Special categories of adjunct faculty are usually set up for welfare mothers and working women. This is another form of female volunteerism, and we are put in this devastating position by the fact that we are but a token program.

Perhaps a model from the past may help us to see our situation in a clearer light. In the nineteen thirties many workers' schools were set up by socialists involved in labor organizing. The schools spoke both to the needs of workers' intellectual and artistic development as a people with a shared cultural identity, and to the need for organizing a working class opposition to a capitalist economy. In the beginning these schools were rarely part of established universities, although a few were. Those that were in universities were noticeably different from the others. They taught workers some facts and skills but not the politics of a working class movement. They left out the analysis of a system that depends on wage laborers for profits for corporate owners; they excluded consciousness of worker identity or solidarity.

Those that included these aspects as central to their curricula were separate from colleges, but they were in constant financial difficulties and suffered political harassment. Most were finally closed, while colleges were, at the same time, given grants to establish worker education courses. The whole worker education movement was soon coopted by universities anxious to cash in on the struggle but not to challenge the system that fed its scholars. This same cooptation could and is happening with women's studies, and these pressures demand that we be conscious of what we are all about; that we are part of a revolutionary movement whose goal is to end patriarchal rule. ■

LILITH

Jo Carson, Venice, Ca.



Lilith, legendary first wife of Adam, crops up in numerous ancient writings. Her name has been synonymous with "temptress" for so long that another aspect of Lilith has been nearly forgotten, perhaps purposefully. She was, after all, the first independent woman. —ed.

In every era, in the lands of the Mediterranean Basin and, later, almost everywhere under other names, a woman with glowing eyes and smooth, long hair has haunted the mind of the human male. He has visualized the demon-woman in two ways. She is seen with wings, able to travel vast distances in a moment. In the winged form she flies by moonlight as the captain of an aerial host of the howling spirits of women wronged by men and cheated out of their rights. But usually Lilith is not winged, and is portrayed simply as a flesh-and-blood woman who sleeps, eats, loves, works, dreads pain and death, and seeks a better life for her children.

Lilith has indeed befuddled and enchanted men for a very long time. There is evidence in the writings of those under the sway of her fascination that they fear a relentless side of her nature that hates them and seeks revenge for ancient wrongs, using her blandishments only to lure them to overdue punishment. This aspect of Lilith makes her cousin to the Lorelei and Sirens. Heroes of some of the tales men have endlessly told each other contrive ruses and traps to suspend her power to harm them for as long as it takes to enjoy her and get away safely. Others, wishing to take no chances at all, dose themselves with anti-potions to kill their desire (in advance of such a possibility arising.) Yet others more methodical put aside deceits and magic and invoke the interdiction and majesty of the law: A man who pledges to Lilith shall be uprooted from among his kinsmen and sent into the desert, states one stern old Penal Code.

Rashi of Worms was an interpreter and critic of the Scriptures, writing in the Eleventh Century. He said that to touch Lilith's hair or look into her eyes was to risk damnation. But to do so was almost worth it, for

it was also to fall into an enduring state of delight. Tales embodying this idea along with the notion of Lilith as avenger were common throughout the Middle Ages.

Judaism has supplied a number of charms against Lilith. Lilit-abai! Lilit-abai!, which means Lilith, begone!, is an old and important spell still in common use. Pronunciation and spelling have changed but it is still the same Lullaby! Lullaby! mothers sing to hold at bay the terrors of night when it is time for children to sleep. And another, from the Bible itself, goes: (The place) shall be a habitation of dragons and a court for Lilith, daughter of owls. . . there let her rest and find for herself a place of rest. (Isaiah, Chap. XXXIV). The most secret, most formidable charm of all is the one known as the Kimpezettel: Avaunt, Lilith! Adam with Eve! Adam with Eve! etc. etc. etc.

From the end of the Fourth through the Eighth Centuries Lilith was considered more of a menace to bridegrooms than to married men. Clay bowls called 'Lilith bowls' were used to protect young men on their wedding day, and were manufactured on such a scale in the regions of Mesopotamia that the archeologists of today are still digging them up by the dozens. Most have written in them a legal bill of divorce addressed to Lilith. It was the custom to fill a bowl with water and place it by the head of the bed where Lilith would be sure to see it. She was believed to sneak into bridal rooms with evil intentions toward the happy pair in bed. Since she was also believed to live in the desert, it was assumed that she would like a drink, and a bowl of water could be used to entrap her. As she lifted the water to her mouth she would read the bill of divorce through the liquid. In this way she was served with 'the papers' thousands and thousands of times.

The young men believed themselves to be the husband of Lilith, and knew that the ties to the first love must be sundered before a second marriage may be undertaken with impunity. The notion that every man is the husband of Lilith before all other women goes



back as far as written records. Consider the hoary Arabian tale called:

The Thing With Many Limbs

The Demiurge formed the crab-like shape out of the dust of the desert. It was Two-in-One, a double figure, like Siamese twins. He breathed on Two-in-One to bring it to life, and set the creature down in the shade of some date-palms. Male and female principles were united in the scuttling creature, the two parts being joined together at the hips.

There burst out a storm of lightning flashes and rushing winds, and the double being was riven apart in the violence; and the two parts rolled away from each other, sweating and panting. Thereafter they remained separate, and they were the first couple, and the parts were named Lilith and Adam.

The story below, based on materials of a later period, is pieced together from different sources, and reinterpreted from a female viewpoint. It puts the questions raised by the Lilith legend in another light.

The Indestructible Woman

Adam looked around the Garden, sniffed the perfumes, eyed the animals, felt the breezes, enjoyed the greenery, and shook his head. "I am not going to like it. If I have to stay in this place I am going to need livelier company than a bunch of beasts."

"Excuse me," the Big Image said. "I should not have overlooked that." He knelt for the second time that day between the Tigris and Euphrates, and swept together a handful of dust. He moistened it with a fleck of spittle. Kneading it in his fingers he worked it into the form of a woman. Then he raised the shape to his lips and breathed The Ineffable Word of Seventy-Two Letters.

While the breath still poured from his lips, the figure of mud grew warm and smooth to the flesh of his hand. She struggled onto her knees as she came to life, flung back her hair with a toss of the head, and looked up at the Creator. He took her in two fingers and set her down near Adam.

"Here is the companion," He said, "of the same mud as

yourself."

"Adam was pleased and so was Lilith, and they dwelt together in harmony and loving kindness, neither lording it over the other, and their tribe was increased.

One spring season there were many wild sheep in the area, and she rescued two lost lambs and kept them alive on her own milk so that they became domesticated. She got Adam started learning the art of the herdsman with these sheep while she continued with the horticulture. All went well for another fifty thousand years until he discovered that each spring there were a few more sheep than there had been the previous year.

"I am getting rich," he thought.

He learned to change surplus animals into objects of value by means of an innovation in custom known as 'trading.' He would tether a ewe or a ram in the place set aside for the purpose, and leave it overnight. In the morning the animal would be gone, and in its place would be lumps of salt, axe-heads, bdellium and onyxstone, maybe even a piece of woven stuff. The transmutations occurred most readily when the fresh spoor of alien people was observed in the vicinity. He felt himself much amplified by this new practice, and grew dissatisfied with Lilith.

"All you own are some garden tools," he told her one day. "I am lord of the sheep, and do important trading. This makes me your superior."

"O lord of sheep! O trader!" she mocked, "I think you have inflated your brains with your own hot air by blowing on your shepherd's pipe. You are nobody's superior."

"And another thing,—a long time ago you let me believe that my seed has no virtue. Now I know my sons arise from my loins, and you lied. Now it is my turn, and I choose to believe that you are the pot that contains the soil that nurtures my seed."

"Pot yourself! I too have seed. They are not your children. They are not mine either. The children belong to themselves. You speak like a man drunk on wine who thinks he is king over everything and owns the Earth."

"I do own it," Adam said. "See Genesis 1:26."

"You and that Yahweh! What will you think of next?"

"I shall have Him put it in writing, making me your lord and master. Your part shall be to stay home and obey me. Your duty to serve and please me."

"Not me," Lilith said. "I have better things to do."

"It is the law, and you had better obey it."

"I never heard of such a law."

"I just passed it. Yahweh will write it up in His book."

"I shall obey no such law."

He called her a blasphemous bitch, and refused to listen further. The quarrel grew worse. In the end she snatched up a stone and hurled it, and ran away into the desert.

There are versions of the story in which, at the height of the quarrel, Adam brings out the children and slays them one by one before their mother's eyes in an attempt to force Lilith to accede to his wishes. The myth-and-folklore people tell us that clues lead back from dramatic tales of this kind into prehistoric times. The further back we follow this one the more nightmarish the scene becomes. If the roots of the legend do entwine with real events taking place in the far-off past, then those events were indescribably savage and horrible. There is a version in which Adam causes Eve to be created to replace Lilith when the latter grows rebellious; and it is Eve who orders the children killed lest their existence confound the inheritance rights of her own offspring. Whereafter, Lilith becomes a wanderer in the desert. There is also a variation in which Lilith kills the children herself rather than have them grow up under the new dispensation laid down by Yahweh and Adam. Most of the stories, however, do not mention the fate of the children, as it is not mentioned in the one interrupted above at the point when Lilith threw a stone and escaped into the wilderness.

"Yahweh! Yahweh!" hollered Adam. The Demiurge kicked a thunderhead over, rearing up from behind it in response to His image's summons.

"The woman thou gavest me will not submit to my will. She has run away," Adam complained.

"Did she give you that shiner?"

"Never mind that, I was hit by a stone. She is gone."

"I can easily make you another woman."

"I cannot give up old attachments so easily," Adam wailed. "O Lord, what shall I do?"

"Send after her then and bring her back."

Adam summoned three of his riders and sent them after the runaway. They rode hard with their cloaks unfurled like wings, and their hooded heads along the necks of the frothing horses, and caught up with the woman on the shore of the Red Sea. They reined their steeds around her, and stood them on their haunches, and ordered her back to her husband at once. She refused to go, and darted under the horses' bellies to get away from the three. But one grabbed hold of her hair and rode splashing into the water.

"Don't drown me! Le me go!" she cried, rolling and choking in the waves as he dragged her. "I will make a bargain with you."

The henchmen of Adam decided to listen. They knew that their chieftain valued this woman, and even though she refused to return, he might not like it if they killed her.

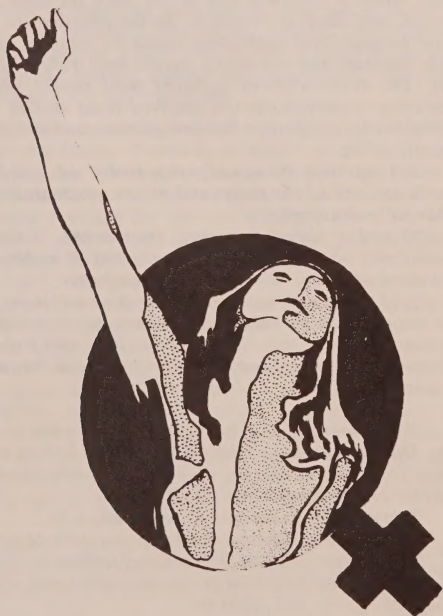
"If you let me go, I shall turn into a demon and stay out in the desert," she said. "You shall teach women and children to fear me, and my powers shall be controlled by you with charms and amulets."

So they threw her down and left her sprawling in the sand and water, and wheeled and rode back more slowly. Adam, when he received the news, went ahead and had an operation whereby he obtained, as a substitute for Lilith, a submissive wife, not of the same mud as he but shaped out of a rib that was superfluous. Eve accepted her secondary role as a woman should under the new arrangements, and never gave him any serious trouble but once.

An alternative story reports that the posse sent by Adam was composed of angels. They flapped through the air and caught up with the woman and ordered her back to Adam's tent on pain of being blasted with curses, but she talked them out of it.

Lilith is frequently portrayed as a bogey for keeping women and children in their places. One variation has her making the following deal with her pursuers: she offers them an amulet which will make her powers against women and children controllable by Adam, and gives this guarantee to seal the bargain: "A thousand demons that would otherwise assail you in various ways will be put to death each day by the Almighty for every child I seize in defiance of the power of this talisman against me." Men retell the story endlessly. One way or another the woman talks those who would do away with her into letting her go, --but as a demon.

Lilith may or may not stand as a symbol for the role of early womankind, in some long-lost bloody episode before the dawn of history. That question can never be settled. We do know she is a figment out of the minds of the men who made up and narrated the multitude of yarns about her. It is the men's voices we hear. It is they who do the talking, for Lilith, for Adam and Yahweh. It is they themselves who talk themselves out of irretrievably destroying her who was the mother of all in the days of Eden, the first beloved, the one woman. They cannot bring themselves to do the terrible deed again, even in imagination. Perhaps they know she is indestructible anyway. ■



Where Is Woman in the "Study of Man"?

Minda Borun, Molly McLaughlin, Gina Oboler,
Norma Perchonock & Lorraine Sexton,
Philadelphia ©1971

This article is an attempt by a group of feminist anthropologists to deal with the evidence available to date in order to piece together a picture of the status of women in societies, past and present. The article is excerpted from a pamphlet, Women's Liberation: An Anthropological View, available for \$1.25 from Know, Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15221.

Women in Prehistory

What do we know about the role of women in early human groups? It is likely that the first agricultural experiments were made by women, since women were largely responsible for the vegetable food supply of early hunting and gathering groups. When the success of plant cultivation made it possible for them to scale-down hunting, the men, in many societies, seem to have taken over agriculture and the role of women in its development was forgotten. The same may have happened for many other industries in which women made primary contributions.

The Myth of Matriarchy

Considerable attention has been devoted in women's literature, to the notion that there existed, in prehistoric times, a matriarchal society in which women as a group were dominant, and held authority for dealing with the major part of society's business. This myth has frequently been put forth as "the anthropological point of view" and used as a basis for justifying the very possibility of women's liberation: if women once had a great deal of power and authority, then surely they can have it again.

Unfortunately, there is as yet no evidence that

such a stage in human society ever existed and a good deal of evidence to indicate that it did not. The concept of a matriarchal stage of development originated with the attempts of 19th-century anthropologists to understand the evolution of human society. They assumed that their own form of social organization--strictly monogamous, male-dominated, sexually straight-laced Victorian society--was the apex of human evolution. Consequently, they reasoned that the dawn of human social organization must have been as unlike this as possible, and postulated a sequence beginning with a stage of sexual promiscuity and "primitive communism," followed by a stage of female dominance, and finally culminating in the patriarchal society. (Bachofen, 1861; Morgan, 1871.)

One factor which contributed to this line of reasoning was a confusion between matriarchy, rule by women, and the forms of social organization reflected in matrilineal descent and matrilocal residence. Matrilineal descent refers to the tracing of kinship relations and membership in a kin group through females only, to a specific female ancestor. Matrilocal residence means a married couple goes to live with the relatives of the woman. These terms refer to group affiliation and residence, not to the distribution of power. Women do not ordinarily have more power in societies which organize this way than in patrilineal and patrilocal societies. In both types of society, the affairs of each kinship group are normally handled by the men of the group. The only difference is that in a matrilineal system the men of the group are the brothers and uncles of the women of the group rather than their husbands and fathers.

The type of family created when a man leaves a woman and her children is generally called "matrifocal" or woman-centered family. It is more popularly and incorrectly called a "matriarchal" family, as if the woman had great authority. Within the family, of course, this may be the case, but this has nothing to do with wider social authority. The stereotype of the American black family is a well-known example of the matrifocal situation. But the black woman's authority is limited to her immediate family group; certainly black women are not a dominant force in the wider American political scene.

Economics and Politics

When the situation of women is viewed from a cross-cultural perspective, one can see a discrepancy between the economic importance of women and their exclusion from political decision-making. In many societies women play, objectively speaking, a fundamental role in the economically productive activities of the group. In hunting and gathering societies, for example, it is usually the gathering activities of women which provide the staple foods that keep the people going from day to day, while male hunters provide only the nutritionally necessary, but at best occasional, protein. In many agricultural societies, women do all or most of the farming. Despite this tremendous economic contribution, women are denied full political and social participation in the community.

The same type of contradiction continues in complex industrial societies such as our own. In modern American society, women play a dual economic role. Their main function is the production and maintenance of the labor force through child-bearing and domestic labor. In addition, they function as a source of cheap labor in low-status jobs, and as a surplus work pool which expands and contracts depending on market conditions. At present, women comprise 37.5% of the paid labor force. (*New York Times*, Jan. 31, 1971). A person's productive value in this society is measured by his cash income and since women receive no pay for their domestic labor, unless it is sold to replace that of another woman, this work is not seen as economically productive.

Looking at societies around the world, one sees that the same activity is differentially valued depending on which sex performs it. Crafts, such as weaving, basket-making and pottery are considered higher status activities in societies where they are done by men than in those where they are women's work. While women may have varying degrees of power over their own husbands and children, they lack authority in the wider social group. The occasional appearance of a politically powerful woman, such as Golda Meir or an Indira Gandhi, does not alter the subservient role of other women in her society. Individual women may hold centralized power; women as a class do not.

Marriage and the Family

The structure of the nuclear family in our society has been seen to be oppressive to women and an important goal of the Women's Liberation Movement is to change it. It has often been assumed that the nuclear family (a married couple and their children) is a universal unit. It is seen either as the only form of family or as the building block out of which other family models are constructed. Yet, in some groups the nuclear family can hardly be said to exist as a functioning unit. While the functions ascribed to the nuclear family do have to be performed in all societies, they do not necessarily have to be performed by that particular unit. Societies have worked out diverse ways of getting the same jobs done.

Ideology

Male dominance is reflected in myth, ritual, cosmology, and religion. Two widespread types of myth purport to explain the inferior status of women. The first, found in our own as well as many other cultural traditions, is the "Adam's rib" myth. In this type of story, man is created first, woman is secondary, a sort of after-thought. Because of her inherent inferiority, she brings about man's fall by tempting him to disobey god.

A second type of mythical justification of women's subordination, is the idea that women had power first, in the form of political control, symbolized by the control of important ritual objects. Women used their power to subjugate men. Men rebelled, seized power and now subjugate women;

turnabout is fair play. Examples of this type of myth can be found among such widespread societies as the Yahgan of Tierra del Fuego (Cooper, 1946), the Solomon Islands (Blackwood, 1935) and Mundurucu of Brazil (Murphy, 1959).

What do such myths mean? There is no evidence from any of these societies to make us believe that the myths have a basis in fact. The idea of a time in the past when women oppressed men, is probably a rationalization of their power on the part of dominant males. In this connection it is interesting to note that many myths of former female dominance show violence directed by men against women.

Similar themes are elaborated in the rituals of many peoples. In "rituals of subjugation" (Cooper, 1946) the men impersonate gods and terrorize the women. Instances of ritual conflict between men and women are widespread. Ritual conflict seems to occur primarily around two institutions: marriage which most specifically defines sex-roles, and initiation, which concerns that part of the community life of one sex from which the other is totally excluded. In "rituals of rebellion" (Gluckman, 1955) women engage in behavior which is considered deviant and "unseemly" in terms of their defined sex-roles. Such rituals are generally found among societies where women's role is acknowledged to be subordinate. The rituals may function as a social catharsis, letting out frustrations in a structured context, which doesn't endanger the status quo.

The ideology of many societies expresses a deep-rooted, pervasive fear of women. Women are portrayed as somehow mysteriously malignant, evil, and dangerous. There are groups in which men may not sleep under the same roof with women, eat with them, walk on the same paths or touch objects habitually used by women, without placing men in mortal danger. Especially strong and widespread are fears associated with menstruation. (Lowie, 1924.)

If women are considered to be inferior to men--and therefore not realistically much of a threat--why should they be feared? In an article entitled "Fear and the Status of Women," Edward B. Harper suggests that in a social system where a particular group of people is subordinated by another, the guilt this situation generates in the dominant group leads to the subordinate group's being unrealistically feared. Robert H. Lowie's suggestion that extreme menstrual taboos are correlated with particularly low status of women in the society as a whole lends support to Harper's theory. (Lowie, 1924.)

Throughout the world the myth, ritual, and cosmology of most societies display the ideology of male supremacy. Women's inferiority is an age-old and widespread theme. However, there are also themes in the myth and ritual of some societies which would suggest that women have not always accepted their status without protest. Resentment and rebellion have been so natural a concomitant of women's oppression that some societies have even provided built-in ritual safety valves for them. Such safety valves, coupled with women's lack of power, have helped to maintain the secondary status of women.■

CABLE TV

Laraine Hibberd, Baltimore

We are women. We are black, white, red, yellow, brown. We are young, middle-aged, old. We are single, married, divorced, widowed, living with men in varying arrangements. We work in insurance companies, hospitals, homes, factories, schools, churches, jails and brothels. We're different; yet we have much in common.

One thing we have in common is the experience of turning on our television sets only to discover that we are all perceived alike. Television denies our diversity of being and experience. According to television, we are all either middle-class housewives obsessed with the unimpeachable spotlessness of our bathroom bowls or middle-class twenty-year-olds obsessed with the shine of our hair and the smells of our bodies.

It doesn't have to be that way. A new technology has been developed that has the potential to reflect our diversity of interests and activities. It can be used by women so that we can communicate with each other and with society in general.

This new technology is called cable communications. All over the country, corporate cable conglomerates are vying for franchises from local governments--franchises that will permit them to build, own, operate and control cable systems. The initial capital investment is enormous. However, since it is predicted that by 1980, 85% of American TV reception will be via cable, those with resources believe the potential revenue from cable subscribers will be great enough to justify the economic risk.

For many years cable TV's potential went unrecognized; its only use was to provide remote communities with TV signals from nearby cities and towns. By the sixties, however, a new element was added. Coaxial cable was developed to the point where it could transmit as many as sixty channels through one piece of wire. This, coupled with the development of portable, inexpensive, easy-to-operate videotape equipment, which could be placed in the hands of just about anyone interested in making tapes, created a revolution in communications. The rush to wire America began.

The promise of cable is that it can be an alternative media. It offers women and other oppressed groups a chance to communicate without being stereotyped and ridiculed. If we have access to the videotape equipment, to technical assistance, to programming funds, and to a system to cablecast our tapes, we can make television our own way for our own needs.

For example, we could tape and cablecast our meetings, workshops, conferences. We could publicize women's events; we could do programs on birth control, health counselling, abortion, child care, legal issues, and job discrimination. We could televise how-to-fix-it courses, women's studies courses, or

any other kind of courses. Women who work in the home could use cable TV courses to complete their educations. Job information and counselling could be programmed. The medium could be a new, flexible outlet for the work of women artists, writers, actors, directors and technicians. All this is possible today. But, we're innovative and if we're given the opportunity to experiment, we may find dozens of additional uses for videotape and cable.

Whether any of this dream becomes a reality depends on one thing: whether the cable franchise granted by the local government demands a system which will provide citizen participation in decision-making, and allow access to programming funds, equipment and training. These factors depend on whether groups and concerned individuals pressure the local government to assure such franchises.

There are dozens of questions which should be asked and answered satisfactorily before any franchises are awarded. What will rates be for installation, monthly fees, and channel leasing? What funds and technical help will be available to the community? Can a tax to fund programming be designated to come out of the profits? And, speaking of profits, where will they go? Who will own the system? Who will control it? To what extent are ownership and control synonymous? Will a private firm get the franchise? Or the city? Or a community corporation? Or a combination of these? Can we experiment with multiple systems and different ownership models? The public doesn't know the answers, nor do the officials charged with making decisions. We all need to be educated.

That's why the Citizens' Coalition of Maryland was formed. We saw the lack of public understanding about cable and came together to act as a statewide resource pool providing speakers, workshops, reading material, etc., to those interested in learning about cable. We will undoubtedly move into more of an advocacy role as the situation develops locally. I believe women should form or join such groups in order to assure that cable TV incorporates our feminist ideas. We have been abused by the media all our lives--from comic strips to documentaries. If we are to change and grow, we will need to express ourselves, to communicate, to be reinforced by the knowledge that our sisters exist, are struggling, and are making new lives.

Cable presents what may be our last opportunity to know ourselves, our sisters, and the world better. It can help restore to us the sense of local community and shared experience that ultimately holds a society together. Or it can destroy even further our fragile right to privacy. If we deal with cable wisely, it can enrich us; if we do not, it can control us. We have only to decide. ■

Women and their Friends

Emily Toth, Baltimore

As we develop a feminist critical approach to literature, we start changing the questions we ask. Instead of considering metaphor, irony, and symbol, we start looking for answers to political questions. Do male characters take women seriously, or do they assume male superiority? Do the women acquiesce, or fight the female conditioning toward passivity? How do women relate to other women?

When I first taught a course on Women in Literature, I naturally assumed I would teach Lysistrata (411 B.C.) Aristophanes' play is about Greek women during the Peloponnesian War. The women, tired of a war which has dragged on for twenty years, band together and refuse to sleep with their husbands until the men end the war. After a number of comic skirmishes, the men give in, the war ends, and everybody gets to bed. Lysistrata has often been called "The First Women's Liberation Play".

As my students and I discussed the play, we recognized some of the limits of Aristophanes' vision. In the opening scene, for instance, Lysistrata has invited the Greek women to discuss their plan. But how do they greet each other? To Lampito, the Spartan, Lysistrata says: "Why darling, you're simply ravishing! Such a blemishless complexion--so clean, so out-of-doors!" And will you look at that figure--the pink of perfection!" (Douglass Parker translation.) Another woman admires Lampito's breasts. Their inspection turns to a third woman, and they remark on her pubic hair; to a fourth woman, remarks center on the size of her backside.

What we see is women judging each other simply by male standards. Male-identified, they check each other's assets--they "show their wares." Women see each other as sex objects for the men. For the moment they are working together, but the seeds of competition are already there in the ways in which they look each other over. Later Lysistrata is forced to play a dictatorial role in order to prevent the women from sneaking home--to take care of the children (the "compassion trap") or to have sex (the phallus as the ultimate deity.) The standards are male; leaderless co-operation is impossible. The women unite only for a short-term goal, and their weapon is the use of themselves as sex objects.

Seeing Lysistrata this way, I began to look at other literature more closely--and found that, by contrast, independent, authentic women characters often have strong and close relationships with other women. They are not competitive. Nora, in Ibsen's Doll's House (1879), is motivated to leave her insensitive

husband Torvald in part because of the example of her friend Christine Linde, who is self-supporting. It is true that Christine wants a man or children "to live for," but she also helps Nora see the significance of honesty in human relationships. Unlike Torvald, who enters Nora's "woman's place" only to make demands or instruct, Christine is co-operative and selfless.

There are many novels in which women serve as possible role models for one another. Dr. Nolan, the woman doctor who treats Esther Greenwood in Sylvia Plath's The Bell Jar, (1963) answers in a straightforward fashion Esther's questions about sex and other women. When Esther shows Dr. Nolan a clipping her mother sent her in "Defense of Chastity," Dr. Nolan bursts out laughing, exclaims "Propaganda!", and helps arrange for Esther to get a diaphragm.

At another point, Esther asks, "What does a woman see in a woman that she can't see in a man?" Dr. Nolan's answer is "Tenderness." Dr. Nolan is supportive without being directive, and it is Dr. Nolan, finally, whom Esther follows at the end of the book, to an open door, with question marks beyond.

A woman who seeks her own identity often seeks it through continuous conversation with other women--as do Nora and Esther. Sometimes she is confronted with two, polar role models--as is Edna Pontellier in Kate Chopin's The Awakening (1899).

Edna, married to a man not entirely unlike Torvald, awakens to sexual desire and to wonder about her own place in the universe. She has already known about "that outward existence which conforms, the inward life which questions." In the summer of her awakening, she sees women who incarnate the two sides of life.

Madame Ratignolle conforms completely to the proper existence of wife and mother. Golden-blond, with round arms, madonna-like, she is totally devoted to her husband and children. She believes Edna should be the same. She is the affirmation of the female universe.

But Edna is also friendly with the great questioner among women: Mlle. Reisz, a "disagreeable little woman, no longer young... self-assertive" and unmarried. She is dark and ugly, but her splendid piano-playing entrances Edna. Later Mlle. Reisz talks with Edna about being an artist, about needing "The soul that dares and defies." She represents a counter-universe.

Edna sees, then, two role models in her two friends: the "mother-woman," seeking a sense of self through relationship to others; and the artist, finding her sense of identity through herself. These two relationships, even more than Edna's romances with two men, contribute to her seeing the impossibility of an authentic existence for herself. As with Nora and Esther, other women serve to define the possibilities and limits of woman's place.

Today we are defining an entire gamut of possibilities for the female sex. In order to do this, we need to relate well to other women. Then, in literature as in life, we become able to ask the right questions--and perhaps eventually to answer them. ■

UNTITLED

A brother told me
just last night
that one day
i was gonna
dig somebody
real tough
and if i could burn
i would get over.

Cause if a man
has to stoop
to doing a domestic thing
he said
he's gonna start
not coming home
and start juggling around.

That's your place
cause the brother
he said
is involved
with developing
his creative energies.

What i should have
said is:

I already dig
somebody
real tough.
Me.
And i am not
about to let
myself starve
nor will i
jug around
on myself.
And i know my place
is here
at my typewriter
writing back
at you.

I should have
said that
but i didn't.
What I did say was:

Uh huh uh huh uh huh.

Michele Wallace, New York City

Declaration

Electric the charge
builds up, jumps the synapse: I
love you. Shocked, you wince.

Nancy Rice, Hatfield, Mass.

TO MY HUSBAND

You say you're not an organ grinder.
I know better.
Why else have me wear this ring,
Dance and sing,
Dress up for your blind friends?
You smile and pass the cup for them
To drop their copper comments in.

Jo McManis, New Orleans, La.



control

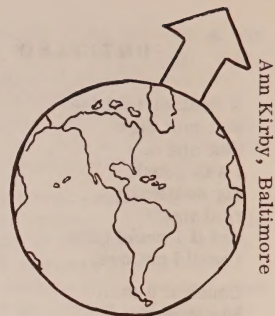
here we two female human beings are
sitting on the couch and i am close to you my
friend the daylight world we've learned has got
our relationship in its grip and i can't move
my arm to where it wants to be
around you.

it stays here alongside my body where it has been
taught to belong when i try to let it go to you
it will only approach and pat your hand three times
and return to my side god help me i want you so.

Freddie Creed, Birmingham, Ala.

MALE PERSPECTIVE IN LANGUAGE

Jessica Murray, Providence, R.I.



The significant fact of sexism in language has already been dealt with in the feminist literature. The question of the general male pronouns ("each to his own"), has been brought up, and argued over extensively. The Mrs./Miss distinction has been challenged with Ms. The deepest studies deal with word usage and semantics, examining the sexist patterns that occur in language (rather than merely offering to correct offensive terms and have done with it).²

It seems to me that there is something much more far-reaching about the sexism in language than the offensive words themselves. There is something inherently disturbing about the fact that the word Man means both "the human race" and "male(s)"; about the fact that we as women must unconsciously switch sexes in order to identify with the unmarked human pronouns his and him, which are supposed to be understood as neuter. There is something going on above and beyond the linguistic level when, in my Spanish lab at school, I am called amigo (masculine form for "friend") by a pre-recorded voice that cannot see that I am female.

I will argue that the male bias of language, exemplified above, is an indication of a male outlook that pervades human culture; that the grammar is only a reflection of a phenomenon which goes so deep as to be concerned with our very definitions of Humanity; that the language we use, like everything else that reflects our culture, is based on the archetypal assumption that human means male.

The Spanish tape which blindly addressed each student did not use amigo (masculine) half the time and amiga (feminine) half the time, which might have seemed to be a reasonable solution to the problem. Because there are more female students than male in the language studies, by and large, it is hard to believe that the makers of the tape used amigo because they assumed there would be more males than females listening. The reason behind their choice of the male form has to do with the double-leveled meaning of the word: amigo can mean friend (male) or friend (unmarked for sex). (Similarly, men (the species) and men (males).) And yet, in this situation, the abstract ungendered meaning of amigo could not have been appropriate, for each student was being directly addressed and a specific sex-marked form of the word was required. One must conclude that the neuter meaning and the male meaning of amigo were confused here.

A similar confusion frequently occurs with the word man (or Man). At a philosophical lecture on "The Images of Man" (obviously a case of the abstract usage), I, as a woman, could feel included in the lecturer's

beginning sentences about "man and God". And yet, here and there I became aware of direct references to the actual maleness of the "men" he was talking about. The speaker said something like this:

How does Man see himself? As a salesman?
A doctor? A dentist? As far as sexuality goes, the Kinsey reports on the activities of the American male surely affect his self-image in this regard....

Clearly here I was no longer included in the identification. No women listening could any further identify with his word Man; there had been a semantic shift in scope from man (the species) to man (the male). And the intriguing thing about his sudden change of meaning was that it went by unnoticed. How is it that the listeners made the conceptual transition between the vast abstract collective Man to the modest gender reference man with such ease? My contention is that the two meanings are tacitly understood to be consistent. The speaker's subject was the modern dilemma of all people, supposedly, yet his examples revealed that the people he had in mind constituted an all-male group. Had he listed female professions in his example instead of male ones, the audience would probably have been confused as to his purpose: the "people" he was discussing would have suddenly become marked for sex. In the same way, had the Spanish tape indiscriminately called each student amiga (feminine) instead of amigo, there would have been surprise from all sides: the word would now be charged with a specific gender reference.

The fact that the male term is so easily blown up into the general realm of humanity is evidence for the fact that in this culture human means male; and the fact that the female term can only be understood in a specifically sex-marked sense supports this. These are the semantic connotations that lie behind the concepts of male and female: your general, everyday, unmarked "person" is male; and then, off in another realm where gender is the primary characteristic, are Women. The assumption of maleness which caused the recorded instructor to call us all amigo can be restated this way: All people are male until proven female.

On the non-linguistic level, examples are legion of the concept of maleness being interchangeable with the concept of humanness. On the Sistine Chapel ceiling, for example, Michelangelo painted Adam, the first male, to symbolize the "Birth of Man" (abstract usage). And yet our belief that this "Man" was to mean "all people" is strained when we see that "The

Creation of Eve (Woman)" is portrayed on another part of the ceiling. And again: was Eve the vehicle of man(the male)'s Fall or of man(the species)'s Fall? The striking paradox that is raised here, that of Woman being part of humanity and conceptually excluded from it, has never been resolved.

In a play I recently read which was supposed to be an illustration of the timeless theme of "the human figure" in a void, all the six characters were male. Even if a female reader were able to begin the play identifying with these men (who were all soldiers!), she surely could not sustain the identification after coming to the part where her sex is mentioned in the play for the first time:

(The men are drinking together.)

All we need is girls! one says to the others.

The female reader at first feels included in this story of "the human figure" by virtue of her species; but at the mention of the "girls" her sex suddenly comes into play, as being markedly different from that of the protagonists. Now she is emphatically excluded. The woman who tries to empathize with literature or art or even scientific theories which were written from a male perspective will constantly find herself being talked about, not talked to.

The assumption is that the audience is all male. Take this sentence from an art historian who is writing about the development of the use of drapery in classical Greek sculpture:

It was naturally in the figures of women that the convention of floating drapery was most fully developed.

The male outlook here is subtle to those who have never noticed it before; and I know that it goes unnoticed by most academic women. The gist of the message is that women have more interesting bodies than men, or bodies more conducive to being enhanced by the inundating forms of drapery. The maleness of the point of view is utterly taken for granted by the guy writing; note his use of the word naturally.

If people are assumed to be male unless specified female, then women have the secondary status of a side issue, or a special case. Again, from my Spanish text, the essay on topic of marriage was phrased this way:

Describe your conception of the perfect woman (man).

Here the woman's viewpoint is presented in parentheses. From the archetype that states that men are the normative humans, it follows that women are parenthetical in a conceptual sense.

Occupying as they do a special or exceptional realm, women are often singled out in language by means of specifying affixes or substitute terms. I will use as an illustration of this a paragraph from an art history book, where the critic is contrasting two artists' treatment of the same theme. An interesting linguistic distortion results. He says that in one rendition there are "angels" present, while in the other rendition there are "girls" present:

(The 15th Century painter) Filippino had painted girls, half-shy and half-curious,

accompanying the Virgin on her visit; Fra Bartolommeo wants not that the spectator should smile but that he should be stirred to devotion. (The Bartolommeo painting shows male angels with the Virgin.)

But the Filippino painting shows, in fact, female angels: their halos are visible. Why then has the writer called them "girls"? First of all, there is an assumption here that all angels (theoretically sexless) are normally male. Secondly, there is the linguistic twist which seems to have acted on the concept female angels so that it got expressed with the word "girls." Conceivably, something like this went through his mind:

angel(female) → female angel → girl

Angels who are portrayed as female, then, by virtue of their conspicuous femaleness, deserve a different term. And the offensive thrust of the critic's paragraph is clear: the artist who painted regular (male) angels succeeded in creating the more serious, devotional work, while the presence of female angels ("girls") in the other painting debases the dignity of the subject. Male perspective shows up in this sentence still a third time in the pronoun he, referring to the spectator. (Surely the he which is supposedly unmarked for sex is really an implied male reference; for wouldn't a man be more likely to laugh at those "half-shy girl" than a woman would?)

A more familiar example of female specification in language is the prefixing of lady- or woman- or female- to occupational terms. A poem written by a friend of mine illustrates this phenomenon quite succinctly, I think:

When I grow up I want to be a female vocalist.
When I grow up I want to be a lady veterinarian.
When I grow up I want to be a woman lawyer.
When I grow up I want to be a boy doctor.
...and they'll say that's
redundant ³

Part of the connotation behind the term which has been thus feminized, for instance lady doctor, is that this doctor is not an ordinary, proper doctor. The subtly derisive tone to this expression also has to do with the ironic presence of the chivalrous compliment "lady" in the context of a kind of put-down.

Even when they are being flattered, women are usually treated as a special case. Varda One of Everywoman Magazine quotes a situation where a woman is complimented for having a trait that men are simply assumed to possess:

After a recent radio interview the male host complimented Madalyn Murray O'Hair for being "an articulate and intelligent woman." When I asked him if he ever had complimented a male guest for intelligence, he admitted he never had. This is the perfect example of a left-handed compliment, telling a woman she has the qualities you take for granted in an average man. ⁴

The most conspicuous example of woman-as-special-case, in language and without, is the sexualization of women: the tendency to view them as beings whose whole characterization is their femaleness. In language, in writing (fiction and fact), in the media, one finds that a woman's gender is the most significant thing about her. When the lecturer of that



Joan Rothenberg, Dewitt, N. Y.

talk on "The Images of Man" referred to some former students of his at a women's college, he called them "my girls." Surely had they been men, or even a mixed group, he'd have simply said "my students." From the male perspective of language, femaleness is constantly being pointed out, emphasized, remarked upon regardless of its irrelevance to the context. It is really overwhelming to consider the preponderance of female sex terms- bitch, slut, broad, chick- compared to the scarcity of male ones. The one term I can think of that denoted wanton sexuality in a man- stud- has nothing of the vicious tone of slut. The only other male sex term that comes to my mind is- prick. The relative lack of these terms suggests that men are considered full people, whose sexuality is only a small part of their whole make-up. In Italian, cazzo (prick") in reference to a man is an insult; fica ("cunt") in reference to a woman is a compliment.

One of the most interesting examples of the sexualization of women in language is the word girl. Literally it means "young woman", but it is often applied indiscriminately as to age. A parallel can be found in the use of boy again indiscriminately as to age to refer to male blacks in the Old South. The motive behind this juvenilization is clearly disrespect. Yet there seems to be another level to the use of the word girl to refer to full-grown women: in some instances the term carries a sexual connotation which is not so emphatic in the word woman. For instance, I was once told that so-and-so (male) had once had "a girl in the Philippines". I immediately understood the term as it had been meant: the guy had had a mistress. The term was not marked for age; I wasn't necessarily to think that the woman had been young. The factor of age explicit in the term serves the implicit sexual meaning only in that it is younger women who are the more sexually desirable to men (besides good looks, youth suggests vulnerability and innocence, both of which traits are sexually desirable in woman, and not in men). Hence, reference to a woman's (metaphorical) youth seems to titillate men: from the affectionate term "baby" to the hyperbole of the Beatles' song "Little Child".

Because women are actually thought of as sex objects, they are linguistically treated as such ("Wine, Women, and Song"). And because a sexual tone is so deeply embedded in the word, a euphemism had to be invented as a polite substitute. Lady fulfills this service, protecting the user from the uncomfortable, oversexed connotations of the word woman. Linguist Robin Lakoff points this out.

Lady is really a euphemism for woman, but gentleman is not nearly frequent enough to classify as a euphemism for man. Just as we do not call whites "Caucasian-Americans", there is no felt need to refer to men commonly as "gentlemen." And just as there is a felt need for such terms as Afro-Americans, there is similarly a felt need for "lady." One might even say that when a derogatory epithet exists broad, etc.,⁵ a parallel euphemism is deemed necessary.

The word lady makes a fascinating study. I find it to be true that those men who are the most troubled with the single-minded viewpoint of women as sex objects are

the ones who use the gallant lady most often. Word choice can be extremely suggestive of people's private thinking.

Recent feminist essays have pointed out many cases of lexical inequity: where words of a male/female pair are markedly nonreciprocal in meaning. For instance, a superior or exceptionally adept man is a master, but a mistress is someone's whore. (Mistress once had the social-superiority meaning as well; and like many female terms, the meaning degenerated.) Another example of this type of inequity in language is the pair frigid/impotent. Dorothy Hage's paper on sexism in language ("There's Glory for You," *Aphra*, Vol. 3, no. 3) deals with the multi-leveled distinctions between these two words, whose disparate meanings exemplify the workings of sexual politics at a linguistic level:

Frigid implies a passive state, imposed perhaps from without, while impotent implies a lack of normal potency. While the opposite for impotent is potent, there is no opposite for frigid, no term for normal sexual power in women. The word frigid also implies an emotional state ("sexually cold"), while impotent is simply a physical fact.⁶

In her study Language and Woman's Place, Lakoff suggests that women are taught a special "women's language," a distinct set of vocabulary, intonations, and "polite" sentence patterns, which is not geared for real self-expression, and which thus limits a woman's self-confidence in what and how she communicates.

It will be found that the overall purpose of "women's language" is this: to submerge a woman's personal identity, by denying her the means of expressing herself strongly, on the one hand, and encouraging expressions that suggest triviality in subject-matter and uncertainty about it. . . . The effect, finally, of disparate linguistic training of boys and girls is that the latter group is systematically denied access to power . . . and the irony here is that this group is made to feel that it deserves such treatment, because of inadequacies in its own intelligence and/or education.⁷

As far as lexical differences go, says Lakoff, women make far more precise discriminations in naming colors (men do not normally use words like mauve). Lakoff sees disparities such as these as representing the fact that women have been relegated to busying themselves with trivial esthetic matters that men don't consider important. Another disparity between men's and women's speech is the use by women of mild or meaningless expletives ("oh dear") and the use by men of strong ones. Lakoff concludes that women who speak the proper "women's language" are prevented from expressing their feelings forcefully. In the same way, little girls are chastised much more severely than little boys for showing their temper; "high spirits" in little boys is expected ("boys will be boys"). The end result of women being inhibited from showing their feelings is that they are taken that much less seriously by their listeners.

It is lately becoming more acceptable for women to use such traditionally male swear-words as damn and shit, Lakoff notes. However, in no cases do you find men taking over any of the items of the women's vocabulary (no assertively male heterosexual male would be caught dead saying, "What a divine idea!") This is analogous to the fact that as the separate-spheres theory breaks down in the occupations, many women are moving into traditionally male job fields; but one doesn't find many men rushing out to get secretarial or housekeeping jobs. The words which women have been prevented from using, then, are really neutral words, not male words; just as the vast range of occupations that have been denied women constitute a human (not male) realm, which has only been categorized as "male" by default (since women were kept away.) In this way, Lakoff's "women's language" is not in the least parallel to the regular, "men's language." As she says, it represents a special offshoot to regular language, and was designed for a purpose: to adapt to the societal conception of women, who like "animals and servants are typically expected to be docile and placid," and to keep them in their place.

Language is a powerful conceptual force, and, as a transmitter of society's deep biases, it can be a means of conditioning our thoughts. I think it has been amply demonstrated that words are not mere empty vessels of syntax and semantics: they can fairly overflow with implicit opinion, and they can and do perpetuate prejudice. The terminology applied to our movement by a hostile press is a prime example. Eschewing the proper term "feminism", the media coined the curt abbreviation "women's Lib", a phrase which connotes, needless to say, a whole different set of associations in people's minds. The connotation of Feminism as a historical movement, with a chronological continuity, suffrage, property rights...all that is forgotten: "Women's Lib" can only be a fad. It's no accident that the new media-ized term came into being: an antidote was needed for the painful questions feminism was raising.

Words can carry messages that their denotations only hint at. Take the phrase "career woman": it has an ugly ring. Definitions, invented by society and imposed on a subordinate group, may have little or nothing to do with the nature of that group. For instance, since the word "feminine" means "weak-and-female", is a woman who is strong- and-female allowed to call herself "feminine"? Technically no, since what women are, in our language and in our culture, is what the men in our society think of us.

It is true that language only represents a phenomenon that is almost too vast to contemplate changing. But the role of language in perpetuating the archetype of women-as-extra-human could be changed, it seems to me, by adopting new language conventions. Congresswoman Abzug's "M's." proposal, for instance, could not fail to make a difference: people would simply not know, with the new title, whether the woman was married or not, and their immediate image of her would not be completely clouded by the fact of her marital status, as it is with "Miss" of "Mrs.". The thing that I consider most important, however, is change in the English pronoun system. Consider the following blurb from

an advertisement for dictionaries:

You spent four thousand dollars to send your child to college this fall. Now spend sixty more to keep him there.

When people read that sentence they do not just brush over the male pronoun, him, as if it were a meaningless place-holder. I think people inevitable call up a mental image of a male student. In their unconscious semantic systems, the him really does represent a male. The picture underneath the blurb could never have been incongruous with the him in the sentence. It seems to me that an egalitarian pronoun system, her-or-him, for instance, could cause people to call up a mental image of a woman student presumable half the time, and give women--for the first time--the opportunity to identify with the concept of unmarked humanness.

For a change of any depth to occur, however, male perspective must be understood, in all its depth. I think we should take a good look at what insight language offers us into our basic concepts: consider the attitude revealed by that seemingly innocuous word Man, for instance...an attitude that is hidden in that it has for so long gone unquestioned. In this sense, then, we should keep phrases like "The history of Man" intact, for they actually mean what they say: the history we know has always been a history of men.

Let us not do away with male-initiated terminology until we fully understand from whence it came. Once women are into the habit of noticing male outlook in what we read and hear, the linguistic exclusions such as the ones I've mentioned will no longer be tolerable. The first step, then, in solving the inequity is ridiculously logical: it requires that we see the male orientation of phenomena such as language for what it is.■

Footnotes:

¹ For example, see the article in the first MS.

² Works done on the subject include: Dorothy Hage, "There's Glory For You", APHRA, vol.3, no. 3; Casey Miller & Kate Swift, "One Small Step for Genkind" N.Y. Times Magazine, 4/16/72; Ethel Strainchamps, "Our Sexist Language", from Woman in Sexist Society, V. Gornick and B. Moran, editors: SIGNET (N.Y., N.Y. 6/72)

³ Elsa King, unpub. manuscript. Toronto feminist

⁴ Varda One, Everywoman, April '72, (p.25) "Manglish"

⁵ Robin Lakoff, LANGUAGE AND WOMAN'S PLACE, unpub. ms. I am grateful to her for many original and insightful ideas I've included in this paper. Besides dealing in depth with linguistic sexualization of women and women's language, discussed here, she suggests applications of these ideas to the realm of theoretical linguistics, language teaching, and the movement itself. Lakoff has been doing research at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. 202 Junipero Blvd, Stanford.

⁶ Dorothy Hage, a N.Y.U. linguist and feminist, has been helping me formulate the ideas in this paper for a long time.

⁷ Lakoff, Language and Woman's Place.

Union Organizer

Shirley Parry, Baltimore

The following interview describes how a traditional women's work, sewing, takes on a whole "new" culture within the context of a factory. When performed in the home, sewing is not legitimized (paid) as a job; in the factory it is exploited as a job. But once women begin to identify themselves as "workers," they have challenged one of the basic assumptions of women's socialization. As they organize against their own exploitation as workers, they develop a sense of solidarity with other women and other workers. A union organizer for fifty years describes the struggle through which this new consciousness develops.

Angela Bambace just retired, at the age of 74, as the only woman vice president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. She was born in Brazil and lived in Italy before moving to New York City with her family when she was 6. She grew up in Harlem and worked in a blouse factory, where she was so active organizing for the union that they eventually hired her as a full-time organizer. In New York she spent several stints in jail after being picked off the picket line by anti-union police. The union was then struggling against the exploitation of women and children in sweat shops.

In 1938 she was given the task of organizing Baltimore, particularly the women workers then beginning to flood into the garment industry. She left her two children in New York with her mother and came to Baltimore knowing practically no one. "I was the loneliest gal in town, I can assure you that much. But I'm not sorry because it was successful."

Interviewer: How did you organize in Baltimore?

Angela Bambace: It was very difficult to get people to join the union. They were afraid they'd lose their jobs. After the depression they were glad to get anything, just a few dollars a week was a big thing for them because they had nothing at all. The women needed the work; the salaries at that time, even of the men, were low--a great deal depended on a second salary.

You could talk and talk your head off, but they were afraid, they were worried. What really gave me a break was when the employer decided that he couldn't just rely on the men as tailors and that he was going



Margaret, Baltimore

to employ women and train them to learn the trade. Up to then we had no women in the industry here in Baltimore. It was all men (because it was men's clothing).

The tailors were very proud of themselves; they were the Big Wigs, and they objected that the employers should employ women. "Women are not supposed to be tailors. Let them go somewhere else, but not here." The employer tried to convince them that he had to have the women working, that was all there was to it. The men were very stubborn about it, so he decided at the same time that he'd pay the women less money. He took advantage of it too. He figured, "Well, you don't want them, but I'm gonna keep them, so I'll pay them less money."

That was the one break I got. When I found this out, I got all the women to come to a meeting. The women were very angry. They were getting paid much less than the men for the same work. They resented the men who objected to their being hired in the first place because that left the door open for the employer to take as much advantage as possible. This resentment grew, and I helped it to grow, you understand. I said, "Look, let's get together, let's have one meeting. I'm telling you that if we work it my way, we will insist you get paid the same money as the men." So they did, they came to the meeting, to my surprise. I said, "Look, if we join the union, we'll go into the same union as the tailors and we'll fight it out there as part of an injustice."

In the meantime, after I talked with them, they picked up a bit of courage and challenged the employer. They told him they would not work, they wanted the same money, they were going to fight the discrimination against the women. They decided all this before they went into the shop. You get always one or two that can really talk and have the guts to talk. This Miss Mack, I'll never forget her, terrific gal, she led them to the employer and said, "This discrimination must end. Otherwise we will report it and we will not work."

The employer, he needed them. As I said, it was not a question of doing any favors. He was afraid

they would leave him so he went onto the floor of the shop and said, "From here on in, everybody will have equal pay for equal work." So that was the first victory that we had and it encouraged the rest of the people to really come into the union.

Interviewer: What was the reaction of the men?

Angela: They had nothing to say when the women got together because the union had caught them doing the wrong thing. They knew they were wrong; they knew the employer wasn't paying the women what they were entitled to.

Interviewer: You were talking about the tailors having so much pride in their work. Did the women take that pride when they became trained?

Angela: Yes they did. Ready made clothes were expensive then. So there was some pride in completing a dress. They made a full garment then. We don't make a full garment now, we chop it up. You make the sleeve and I set the sleeve; you make the collar and I set the collar. It goes down the line, and there is really no pride at all. Because you never see the dress completed, because all I'm worrying about is this collar or these buttonholes or the sleeves, I don't think there's any fun, any pleasure in it now.

But of course working in a garment factory really wasn't any fun--whether they made the whole dress or just a part of it. But when it was broken down into piece work, the women could make more money. They were paid on the basis of, say, how many collars they set each day. When it's the same operation over and over, they can go faster and make more money. Also the employer doesn't pay the women as much when he is training them, so if he only trains them for one operation, collar setting say, the training period is shorter.

But it's the same thing in the auto industry and others, you've got the assembly line, and there's no more fun in doing part of a car or part of a dress. It's difficult to take any pride in it.

Interviewer: That early pride that the women had too (before the assembly line mode of production)... that was an important factor?

Angela: Yes, in terms of being proud of being able to work and earn some money too, and being proud of helping to build the Union.

Interviewer: Have you ever tried to oppose the assembly line type of work?

Angela: In the beginning we did. We opposed it in New York particularly because we were not accustomed to it. But it's very hard to oppose it when you have no members who can make that dress. In New York the Italians and Cubans can make a whole garment, and so they fought it. I don't think they have this division like we have here, like an assembly line. They may have a semblance of it, but many of them are still dressmakers.

But here you can't do it. The employer is right in a way. You would have to spend a great deal of time training them to make a whole garment, and it doesn't

pay--either the boss or the worker.

Interviewer: Do you think there are workers who would want to do that?

Angela: Yes. You know, the strangest thing... we have a shop in Hagerstown. It's a big shop and they make good dresses. The employer set up a group she knew were experienced sewers, who knew how to handle a garment. She did not break it into tiny parts, but... you make the whole top, or the whole skirt, or the whole jacket. She selected a group of about 30 or 40 people and set them up in a separate group.

They made less money. In the beginning they lost more time. But they were the happiest people. They were willing to work for less money. Because they felt they saw the garment finished, you know? They took pride, how do you say it? Before, all day long, they would just run a seam, run a stitch here, run a stitch there, all day long.

The change from that to this was really surprising, you know. For a good bit of time, they lost money, but then they picked it up and they're doing well now. In the beginning she tried to give them a minimum wage, not less than that to go home with, to encourage them to work.

Interviewer: I wonder where she got the idea?

Angela: Well, because she's a very good worker herself. She knows. She had been a worker herself, she knows every part of the garment, she can put anything together.

In the beginning, we thought, well, they won't go, they're so accustomed to that (assembly line) now. But they did. They like it very much and they're still with it.

It might succeed in other places, but other employers won't take that up. They don't have any time, no time for that sort of thing. It's easier, you see, just to find a woman who can come in and just sew a seam. But there's really no pride in that.

You know the vocational schools teach girls how to sew, cut a pattern, how to make a whole garment. When they asked me to speak, I told them, "It's good, but I don't know why you're training them that way because they won't find a job where they'll make the whole garment." That kind of training is good for yourself, you know, but not for industry. I don't say that they should just make sleeves, or this or that, but they will not find a job making the whole garment. I guess the student would be a better worker anyway (with that training), even in the system that they have today, but she would not be satisfied to go in and do a little small part here and a small part there.

But you know, it's really a difficult industry. Especially now with the problems we have from imports. We've lost thousands of jobs because of the foreign-made clothes and more and more imports are sold each year, but foreign countries will not allow our clothes in. One of the only ways we can compete is in production. Even with the shorter hours, holidays and vacations that we have won for

our members, we can keep pr
becoming a question of produ

Interviewer: How did you get
now? Was it hard as a woman

Angela: Yes, it was hard. I
had been sent here to organi
failed, each one got impatient
home. I didn't know that wh
they probably decided to sen
women were coming into the
a woman could handle them
they were right.

I think that men don't hav
that kind of rapport that a w
There should be more...so
than one woman on the (exec
them, "I'm the token, you h
you put one on."

Interviewer: What did they respond to that?

Angela: Oh, well, they just laughed at it, you know...
But you don't make organizers overnight, and I don't
know how quickly one can find a woman who can re-
spond like that--to go out of town, to work and
leave her family. Organizing is a hard job. There
are no hours, you have to visit people at home and
talk to them, and sometimes the door slams, and
they won't even listen. I don't know that there are
too many such women.

But I think that women have played a very impor-
tant role in our industry, there's no question about
it. The strike of 1910 when all the women went out,
and they really fought. It wasn't easy, there were
terrible fights. They'd put you in the paddy wagon
and take you to jail. The police got you out of the
picket line so it would be wide open for anybody (scabs)



I. L. G. W. U.

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nd you're no good.

talked earlier about how when the
women came into the industry that was dominated by
the skilled male tailors, it was the women who were
getting less money, so they organized as a group.
And as they organized there was a real identification
with other women. Is there any sense of solidarity
with each other as women today?

Angela: Oh, I think they have a sense of solidarity, it
wasn't only in the beginning. You know in the begin-
ning of all unions--it's the funniest thing--the tobacco
workers, the cigar makers, they didn't want any wo-
men. They fought with the employer not to take wo-
men in, for some particular reason. They probably
thought, I don't know, they wanted to hold onto it all
themselves. I don't know the history, but I know the
cigar makers went out on strike because they didn't
want women to come into the industry. There's been
a lot of discrimination against women, there's no
question about that.

Interviewer: What about the leadership of the union?

Angela: I don't think it was a personal discrimination
against women. I don't think the leadership (male)
even thought about it. But there wasn't enough fight,
you know. There wasn't enough noise made by women,
enough resentment on the part of women saying, "Why
don't you put us on? Look what we did, we helped
build the union."

If there was some resentment, I certainly don't
know of it, I didn't hear of it. That's the way the
union started, you know, (male-dominated), and it
winds up that way.

Interviewer: Do you still consider yourself idealistic?
Do you still have that hope of trying to build a better
world?

Angela: I think that unions have built a better world--
I think it has stayed with us, within certain limits.

We think the members need a lot of things beside
just bread. You can't just live on bread alone. Our
union has held on to that as much as one could with
today's thinking. There may be other unions too that
do it, but I don't think there's much of it going around.
Of course now we have Mr. Nixon for another four
years. Oh boy!■

Double Locked Doors

Margaret Blanchard, Baltimore

"We have as much to fear from those who protect us as from those who attack us."

Bonny lept up and checked for the fourth time the rattling window shade, to make sure a man's leg wasn't shoving through. Any man coming through that window would have to be a human fly, but in the city anything was possible. It was just too hot to close the window. Even if she did, she'd have only that fragile pane between her and whatever menace lurked outside. On the way back to the chair she checked again the extra lock on the door, unlocking it just to see if it was locked.

On the card table lay the Times, its horror story folded in upon itself although she could still see, as clearly as if they were snapshots of her own classmates, the pictures of the girls brutally murdered in Chicago, lured out of the bedroom and brutally murdered one by one. She took up in one pudgy hand the copy of I and Thou she was trying to read while her other hand twisted through the strings of her long brown hair. Never before had she had this much nervous energy -- but there was no place for it to go except round and round the room, checking all the exits to make sure they were closed.

Down in the street a woman was screaming. Bonny peeked out the window. It was the same woman who tracked her husband up and down Avenue A in the daytime from bar to bar, proclaiming his neglect. During the day she kept far enough behind him so he couldn't turn suddenly and strike her. From a distance she sprayed him with abuse. "You goddam no good motherfuckin sothead, why don't you get a job, why don't you drop dead, why did I marry you, you goddam worthless sponge parasite son of a bitch."

The couple's antics had become a neighborhood ritual. Men sitting on their stoops rasped out stale jokes to which the salmon-haired, pop-eyed, bony husband responded with a slow sweep of his arm and flip of wrist as she, deaf to the teasing, wailed behind him, casting her grievances after him, down the street and around the corner.

The wife was not an old woman but her body was webbed in a posture of nagging. Her face was not wrinkled nor her body bent except in pursuit of him. In the night her nagging turned to screeching. Then to shrieking.

Suddenly now in the darkness the woman sounded like a hyena or a loon. Bonny felt stranded and helpless. She told herself she wasn't a baby any longer. She turned up the fan so it could outscreech that god-awful, inhuman voice. She switched on the radio: the 11 p.m. news: riots in Cleveland, war in Vietnam, murder in Chicago.

She used to lie for hours on the beach sunbathing without the slightest impulse to stir except to smooth on more suntan lotion. Now she couldn't sit still for a minute.

Her hand jerked toward the phone and dialed Jack's number. When Jeanne answered, she slid into a lie. "Anything good on TV tonight? I'm bored, but too broke to go to a movie."

Jack took over the phone before Jeanne could answer. "Jack," she tried not to fall into the little sister tone, but it was automatic. "Could I sleep up there tonight? It's just too damn hot down here."

She might have liked to tell Jack the truth -- except for his objections in the first place to her living

on the lower east side. Actually her grey one-room, fourth-floor walkup had seemed exciting -- never sinister -- until this weekend when her roommate went off to the Jersey shore, leaving her alone.

Coming to New York City had been, Bonny was absolutely convinced, THE turning point in her life. It meant a breaking away from her father who had sheltered her like a golden egg since her mother died. But now she had to be on guard against Jack who, though he was only two years older, threatened to take over her father's protective role. Somehow it was obnoxious the way he did it, as if he had to put her down at the same time he was helping her out. With her father it seemed different. It was more natural for him somehow. Even though it still sometimes immobilized her.

On the phone Bonny hinted about the difficulties of finding transportation uptown so late until finally her brother volunteered to pick her up, reluctantly since he had found a parking spot that was good for the next day and hated to give it up.

When they got to Jack's building, she wanted to stoop down and kiss the polished floor of the elevator, but restrained herself. In the spacious, carpeted apartment with its wide picture windows sealed in by air conditioning from pollution, howling, and human flies, she felt she was home again, safe in her golden shell.

Since she was sleeping on the couch in the living room, she had to endure a gangster movie on TV which Jeanne left on until 2 a.m. Actually the movie was comforting. How could you really be frightened of Humphrey Bogart and Edgar G. Robinson, no matter how sinister they seemed. Boogie men made you feel better because you knew they weren't real.

(Nonetheless there was that movie she went to with Jack when she was very little -- "The Little Red Schoolhouse"-- her father took the title literally-- which had one unforgettable scene of Edgar G. Robinson working his rubber face into mute screams as the audience watched him through the windshield of his sealed car which sank slowly into the mire of the millpond into which he had just driven, accidentally crashing through the guardrail of a bridge while fleeing law enforcement officers. . . . She and Jack watched until the very last bubble spread itself out on the smooth surface of the pond. Afterwards she wanted to talk about it, but Jack was ultrasual, said he saw those kinds of things every Saturday. She was glad her father didn't usually allow her to go with him.)

That night she expected to have her sleep pierced by images of blood and gore but instead she fell sound asleep and dreamt of sunbathing on the Jersey shore and chatting over the pinball machines at Asbury Park with Humphrey Bogart. The next day her fears seemed silly. They had completely evaporated.

There was nothing for her to do at Jack's place, but she didn't feel like leaving, so she hung around until Jeanne asked if she'd like to go with her to the Mets-Dodgers game. Jack was playing tennis with a friend from school. Much as she hated baseball, much as she was uncomfortable with Jeanne, she said yes.

Once when she was small, a ball hit her in the face and bloodied her nose. After that her father told her she was no athlete, and shouldn't bother playing sports. Which was fine with her. She was chubby and uncoordinated and hated to make a fool of herself. Later she had a perfect excuse for not playing; she got polio. Even though it was a mild case and had no after-effects, it protected her from sports. Later she always managed to get out of gym classes by telling her teacher about her polio or having terrible cramps or, if all else failed, floating around in the shallow end of the swimming pool for forty-five minutes. She considered women who were active in sports FREAKS. She never forgot the time her father almost doubled up in his easy chair jeering at an account of an all-female baseball team. She still couldn't get over the fact that her own brother--who wasn't exactly a jock himself--had married one of those freaks.

She tried to distract Jeanne from her passion for baseball by suggesting they go to the park instead. She said she wanted to go to the Zoo and investigate the boa constrictor because a boyfriend had told her it was a myth that they swallowed people whole because they really ate nothing bigger than rats, and besides they were scared of human beings, and in the movies the actors had to wrap the snakes around their bodies and hold them there because all they wanted to do was run away back to their own kind, and wasn't that marvelous...interesting...because it showed that nature was really essentially harmless?

No, Jeanne would rather go to the game. Besides no one ever said that boa constrictors swallowed things; they strangled their prey, and the reason the actors held them around their bodies is that snakes in the movies were dead ("Can't you just see some smoothie from Hollywood volunteering to embrace a live snake?"), and furthermore, it was the mamba which swallowed its food whole, including human beings; it was known, in fact, to track down human beings, and had even been known to consume an entire deer whole without regard for its horns which consequently stuck through its skin--a fatal miscalculation. Furthermore, they were about as harmless as a Bengal tiger because they hissed out a deadly spray which blinded people on the spot.

"Did you hear about those murders in Chicago?" Jeanne asked as they walked to the subway. "It's amazing how they just sat there and let him murder them one by one."

"No," she lied, "what murders?" What else could they have done?

"Don't you read the paper?" Jeanne asked so coolly Bonny couldn't understand why she sensed the question was judgmental. Then she described the brutal murders of the eight roommates in Chicago. Even under Jeanne's crisp dissection, the story tightened through Bonny's blood and thudded down through her stomach as it had the first time she'd accidentally read it in the Times. What had really gotten her were quotes from the girls about how much they desired to help people and care for the sick and all.

Jeanne's scaly matter-of-factness infuriated Bon-

ny. She was always so rational, so controlled. Compared to Jeanne Bonny felt like a real klutz--falling all over herself emotionally, babbling on and on about silly personal things. On top of that Jeanne kept defending Bonny's right to stand up to Jack and make her own decisions...which might have been helpful except for the way she did it--so insistently, yet so remotely.

Anyway, ever since she'd told Jeanne and Jack her story about the drunk who collapsed in her doorway and, for the first time, tripped over Jeanne's standard: "So what?", Bonny'd been on guard with Jeanne. She was darned if she was going to be considered one of those exaggerating, hysterical females men made fun of. She could be just as objective as Jeanne could. But now Jeanne's scorn of the dramatic trapped her in a strange kind of understatement.

"It sounds a little gory," Bonny commented coolly.

At first Jeanne's cynicism confused her because Jeanne herself seemed to get excessively enthusiastic about things like baseball games and opera. Then Jack explained that Jeanne was reacting to Bonny's middle-class assumptions. She had grown up in some poverty area of Pittsburgh and found nothing exotic about the activities of the lower class. "She can't stand naive descriptions of places like the lower east side," Jack warned Bonny, too late.

Jeanne didn't look like she'd risen out of the slums, Bonny thought. She was tall and skinny with a long aristocratic nose and an elegant French twist which never allowed a hair to escape and which was almost, but not quite, severe; and she had a way of swerving her head around without unwinding the rest of her body, as if she were listening for footsteps in the distance.

The subway usually excited Bonny, was stimulating for her while it numbed those who rode it every day, but today it seemed a monstrous invention, with its blackness, thick metallic smell, screeching and shuddering, as it swung through the station, shattered all conversation and swallowed all the faces with their scars, beards, bumps and sooty eyes which suddenly seemed so sinister.

When the train rose into the open air of Queens, she was relieved, but it kept rising and rising until they were being wrenched around a bend high above the factories and tenements, rocking back and forth in the relatively clean air--and again she felt threatened. Just as she had held back from the subway tracks for fear of being sucked into the dark pit, now she turned away from the skyline view for fear of the tracks collapsing into the landscape. She didn't dare say this to Jeanne. She jerked her eyes away from the scars, beards and bumps, and stared inwardly through the soot-stained glass as she swung on the strap.

She thought the baseball game would be a wholesome change, but after they found seats in the top layer of Shea Stadium, she longed to turn back and huddle against the inside of the ramp because each frail tier of seats swooped out over the next, supported by godonlyknows what untested theory of modern technology while bearing thousands of unreflecting,

popcorn-munching, beer-swilling spectators.

She spent the entire game leaning back as far as she could, scarcely moving, trying not to think about the Most Spectacular Disaster in Human Sports, 40,000 baseball fans (plus one innocent victim) plunged to their deaths in or around or under Shea Stadium. She tried instead to concentrate on the most boring game in human history, where players who all looked alike, wearing indistinguishable numbers, waited and waited for another such creature to connect his stick to the ball that traveled endlessly from pitcher to catcher to pitcher and so on--such highly refined nonsense that whatever satisfaction might be gained from competition was lost by the fact that neither side got any points.

Then for no reason at all, just at the relief of a little action cracking through the dullness--like someone trying to steal home while the second baseman held the ball and argued with the umpire about a slide--the people around her, with their scars, beards, bumps, and sooty eyes would wave their pennants and toot their tuneless plastic horns and shout like crazy: "Let's go Mets!"

As far as she could tell, although most of the time she didn't know who was up or who was down and couldn't care less, the Mets were going nowhere, but that didn't matter to the fans. Jeanne told her they were at the bottom of their league. Idiot's delight, Bonny decided as Jeanne penciled her scorecard and muttered facts about Sandy Koufax's amazing record, whoever he was. She simply couldn't understand how people could worship these muscle-bound athletes and then rush home to emulate them in smelly alleys and glass-littered lots. What a waste of energy.

On the subway back she watched a small Puerto Rican boy who wore a shirt striped yellow, orange, brown and red, and carried two large leaves the color of the yellow stripes. Later she saw his mother absently-mindedly crumbling one leaf away from its stem until the only thing left was a skeleton of dry veins.

That night she and Jack argued about politics. Jack remained hopelessly Republican, hopelessly dependent on the wisdom of their father's generation. He claimed that the lower east side was full of communists, perverts and sugar cube "trippers."

"So what if it is? What's wrong with LSD? What's so great about capitalism? Its only virtue for you and Dad is that it's hopelessly outdated."

Jeanne remained cynical about politics, factual about history and scornful of Bonny's idealistic theories. In spite of this, Bonny exulted in these discussions because her theories seemed a weapon with which she could rouse Jack's ire and prod him into real response. Most of the time he wouldn't even listen to her. For every conservative view he would cling to, she would whip out a world shaking vision, economic, social, psychic or scientific, whatever she could remember from Pollard's class that sort of fit the topic. But as usually happened, just as she started to feel vigorous and controlled, he pulled out some distinction from one of his law classes to demonstrate how absurd her theories sounded in the face of the hard, cold,

legal realities of everyday life. Then as she sank back into the couch, he leaned forward smugly and switched on the late news.

Warped on the surface of the rounded glass was a picture of the Chicago murderer, who looked like every second man she'd seen in the subway that day. Then she and Jeanne watched a musical with Doris Day and Gordon McRae skipping around like two grinning squirrels. They didn't get to sleep until late and again Bonny fell right off. But this time her dreams gave way to the sound of screaming in the street, a woman screaming over and over as if someone was snarling after her with a knife. She remembered Kitty Genovese--was that her name?--the girl who'd been murdered in the street in front of buildings full of spectators. She thought of calling the police.



But the window was sealed shut, protecting them from such noises. As she tossed around she heard through the wall, the hollow sound of TV screaming, not the real scream she'd just heard. Had she just heard it? Maybe it was only a joke--teenagers screaming for attention, wandering defiantly through the empty streets, shouting intimate obscenities at each other.

The scream on the TV was a woman's and not very authentic. It was as if she knew the hero was just around the next bend of the Amazon or the mountain pass or the railroad trestle, ready with knife or rifle or dynamite to rescue her. The scream was followed by crisis music, focusing, she imagined, on the teeth of the crocodile or the arrows of the Indians, or the wheels of the train, and then on the trembling tonsils of the heroine, growing redder and weaker by the second.

It was all very unreal. But as she lay there, vulnerable, Jack and Jeanne remote in their bedroom, the fire escape right outside the window at her feet, she couldn't stop her mind from running through scenes of their assailant creeping into the apartment, crashing through the picture window and stalking toward her...variant views of the eight student nurses being dragged out one by one to be murdered.

(At first she was too smart for him, she stood up to him calmly and told him her brother was asleep in the bedroom where the telephone was. "I intend to start screaming--so you better get out. He's got a

friend with him too." "A GIRL friend?" the man salivates. "No," she replied, "a huge, strong male, seven feet tall, with muscles bigger than this pillow and harder than this metal frame. He could rip you to pieces, easily. . . ."

or the three of them circling him, edging around him in the darkness, trying to get his gun away without being shot or catching someone else in the line of fire, Jack executing one of his judo flips. . . .

or she sneaks into the kitchen, pulls out a large knife, chops the gun out of his hand, ties him up with the drapery cords, and calls the neighbors to help guard him until the police come. . . .

or she imagines the blade shuddering into flesh, the knife cutting into her own stomach, she struggles to hold onto him until Jack and Jeanne escape. . . .

or she stabs Jack by mistake.)

The horror of it jarred her to an upright position.

She turned on the light and read The Saturday Evening Post, Cue, Reader's Digest and Vogue until it was light outside. Then she went to church with Jack, dozed during the sermon and came back to a luxurious breakfast prepared by Jeanne. She felt good again. The sun was too clear and too bright, and the world polished to too sparkling a wholeness to let in violence.

Later that evening it began to rain. As she waded down Avenue A through the damp refuse of people and animals toward her building, eager to be up and inside again, a little boy, chasing another boy, ran into her and flipped over. As she stretched down to cup his head from cracking into the cement, a woman's screams pounced at her from a window above them. The words were in Spanish and the tone was abrasive. Bonny was confused whether the woman yelled at the boy or at her, so she retreated.

On the doorknob to her building she discovered what she was sure were blood stains. . . Since it was after dinner she expected to find her roommate home, but the apartment was as dark as she'd left it, and as empty. She reached in quickly and switched on the light, leaving the door open so a thief could easily escape. But what if he was in the closet? She pictured herself running into his accomplice or a whole pack of them, hiding in the obscurity of the garbage cans. Where would she flee? To the apartment building across the street? What kind of people lived there? Would they open the door if she pounded on it? They just laughed at, or ignored, the screeching wife who cast her grievances after her husband night after night.

She turned on all the lights and checked the closet, bathroom, under the bed and behind the bookcase where only a midget could conceal himself. She fastened the second lock and turned on the fan. If worse came to worse, she could throw the fan at him. If it wasn't too heavy. It would keep him at a distance. If it didn't come unplugged. She went to the kitchen and grabbed a knife. Although it was dull, she set it on the table next to the folded Times.

Then she thought she heard knocking and sprang to the door, but nothing could be seen through the peek hole, only the long black hallway. That was no conso-

lation. Her eyes felt too vulnerable looking out like that, not to mention her back. She edged back to the chair, took up the knife and clenched it while she leaned back, closed her eyes and involuntarily imagined herself swinging at the black clad figure, striking him, hacking at him again and again.

Horrified at herself, she jerked up and put the knife back. Down in the street the woman was still shrieking at her husband, her mild fish-faced husband who didn't seem worth all the agony she netted instead of him.

Bonny stood up but couldn't move; she was afraid to close herself into the bathroom or even to turn her back to the window to check out the icebox. She put a Joan Baez record on. It depressed her, especially the verse in "We shall overcome": "We are not a-fra-aid, we are not a-fra-aid, we are not A-FRAID todayayayay." She decided to call Jack and confess her terror, but she remembered they had gone out. She paced around and around the room until her body ached with tension. There was only one place she could get to where she'd feel safe.

She took out the knife again and with it in her left hand, she crept along the nearest wall, keeping her back turned away from the door or window. When she reached one end of the bed, she lowered herself onto shaky knees and crawled awkwardly toward the other end. Underneath the bed was a suitcase which she shoved out with her foot as she squeezed through on her back. The dust made her sneeze but it settled again as she lay perfectly still, the knife prone on her breast like a funeral rose.

Under the bed it felt totally dark and totally enclosed despite the light which traced a wiggly line around the rim of the spread. She reached up, hooked her fingers in the springs and pulled herself up as if to blend into the mattress, but the springs bit into her fingers and creaked dangerously. So she lay still again.

Eventually she drifted off and dreamt what she used to dream every night she was in that polio hospital the year she was six, in a ward with two rows of ten beds each, full of children like her with polio, fitful behind the bars of their beds, when every night after the lights were turned off, her brother Jack snuck from bed to bed doing away with all of the children, his talons reflecting the moonlight from the high windows (one night he did it with a knife, another night with a gun, another with a rope, each night a different weapon), always sneaking up to Bonny's bed last because it was in the farthest corner; each time he crept toward her with a fiendishly impassive expression on his eight year old face. Every night she was in the hospital Bonny woke up screaming.

Now she woke up, trembling like a rabbit she'd once seen traumatized by two collies. She tried to shake the dream out of her head, but sleepiness lured into another dream in which she was dressed all in black, with tight slacks, tailored shirt, high boots, long gloves, a black stocking over her head and a black carnival mask over her eyes (like a character from one of the thousands of comic books she read as a child).

Under a black cloak she carried a black hatchet and in the process of flashing from place to place she delicately hacked to pieces George Wallace, Barry Gold-

water, William Buckley and that cop who grabbed her during her sit-in for civil rights and carried her to the paddy wagon while she hung limp in his arms, resisting passively.

That was all she'd ever known how to do. Passive resistance. Let all your weight sink down upon them.

In the bloodless rhythm of pounding her hatchet, swinging it in and out like a baseball bat, she found a tremendous relief. Finally she stood over her sleeping father, the hatchet poised but frozen over his huge grey head while his nose trembled with snores. Around him echoed the screams of her victims as one by one they had been dragged out and brutally murdered.

She swung the hatchet down next to his shoulder and nudged him. As he grumbled to consciousness she ordered him to stand up and get into the batter's box. Then she handed him the hatchet.

"O.K., Dad, she said cheerfully. "Let's see what kind of an athlete you are."

She strolled out to the pitcher's mound, pulled a ball out of the dust and waited calmly for him to position himself. He was poised at the plate, confident and ready.

Her first pitch whizzed past him into the strike zone as he fanned the air with the hatchet.

Her second pitch burned a hole through the blade of the hatchet.

And her third pitch hit him on the nose as he tried to bunt.

"Too bad, Dad," she called out to him as he staggered off clutching his nose.

Who's up next?

Her sleep was shattered by the sound of sirens and a key turning in the lock. Bonny rolled out from under the bed and hurried to open the second lock for her roommate. As Cathy pushed her suitcase across the threshold and reached out to pull the door shut, Bonny stepped out into the hall.

"Where you going?"

"Just for a walk. I'll be back in a minute. I've got to get out of this place for a while."

Out on the street she was an alien. Completely surrounded by strangers. Among them were a certain percentage of maniacs, any one of whom might at any minute grab her from behind, plunge a knife into her chest, or snipe at her from a rooftop. There was no longer a glass buffer between herself and them. It shattered when the shell cracked.

There was no one to turn to. She didn't know the woman who was not old, yet dragged herself around and around the block, wailing; or the mother upstairs who screamed out at the street through the bars on her window; or the people who played baseball in lots littered with glass. She knew no one who would introduce her to them.

But as she clenched her fist, she felt between the twisted fibers of fear, the tension of her own strength. ■

Women in the Art World

Barbara Gold, Baltimore

A few years ago when I referred to a female artist as a woman in my Sunday column I got angry letters--from both men and women--saying I had insulted her. One insisted I had maligned her as a "housewife" although I had never used the word.

Today things are different--and beautiful because of that difference. A few years ago I used to cringe when I got announcements from women artists about their "one-man" shows. Now that doesn't happen anymore.

Many things have happened in the art and woman movement: the women picketed the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum in New York, the conference on "Women in Art" held at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington last spring, the Women's Art Registries, lists of names of women artists and boxes of their slides that are being compiled in various cities.

Unfortunately, things are not at all as good as they might sound: The National Endowment for the Arts announced its Artists' Fellowships for 1973 last November and only about 25% of the recipients are women--up from previous years but still not good enough. Women art students still have more trouble getting jobs than men--and are offered part-time and studio jobs far more often. Few museums are planning to improve their records for giving women artists one-artist shows.

Nevertheless women are beginning to show together on their own with pride and enthusiasm: "Women Choose Women," an adventurous new way of putting together a museum show in which women artists participate along with women curators in the selection process, opened in January 1973 at the New York Cultural Center. Women in the Arts, the group that picketed the Museum of Modern Art, is largely responsible for this.

Here in Baltimore, the last few months have seen two women's photography shows--one at the Johns Hopkins University's Milton Eisenhower Library and a second at the Maryland Institute; "Women in Crafts," and excellent display of ceramics, weaving, and leatherwork at the Fells Point Gallery; and "Black Matri-Images," a four-women show including Alma Thomas, the seventy-seven-year-old painter who is finally achieving recognition (shows at the Whitney and the Corcoran last year) after years of work, at the Murphy Fine Arts Center at Morgan State College.

Each of these exhibitions has been--not because it represented some sort of feminine art--without the

lables and the titles of the shows the viewer would have been hard-pressed to determine the gender of the artists--but because the women artists were accepting themselves as people and affirming that acceptance by their public display.

A quote from Erica Jong's "The Artist as Housewife" in the December issue of *MS* magazine says it all: "Being an artist of any sex is such a difficult business," she observed, "that it seems almost ungenerous and naive to speak of the special problems of the woman artist. The problems of becoming an artist are the problems of selfhood. The reason a woman has greater problems becoming an artist is because she has greater problems becoming a self. She can't believe her own voice. She can't see herself as a grown-up human being. She can't leave the room without a big wooden pass.

That says what being an artist is about so beautifully.

Should this article be about beauty? Or should it be about anger--that all major museum directors but one in the United States and Canada are men, that leading art school presidents can still tell reporters things like: "Well, artists can always sleep with their girl friends," and get them printed, that galleries still maintain quotas for the women artists they will handle?

But are better sales and better jobs all that woman want? The question is not really as bad as it seems for there are two levels at which women artists and all artists find themselves functioning when they go outside the privacy of the studio or where ever they made their art in order to find some greater acceptance for that work. The first level is the traditional one of reviews, gallery shows, group shows, prizes, sales, museum group shows, regionals, hopefully a one-artist show at a local museum, hopefully purchase by a collector whose name will look good on a curriculum vitae, hopefully entrance into a museum collection by purchase, gift, or prize of some sort. These are the things that have long made or broken a career. These are the landmarks by which life in the art world was--and is--plotted.

Women artists have not come to the forefront in that world because, with rare and well-known exceptions, they have been unable to compile the credentials that fitted them for whatever the next step might be. One statistic, used as part of a threatened civil rights suit by the Los Angeles Council of Women Artists against the Los Angeles County Art Museum, makes that clear: 29 out of 713 artists whose works appeared in museum group shows in a decade were women.

The Baltimore Museum has no such specific statistics. No women's group has compiled them yet--and that is the only way to get them. When I called curators there however, they admitted readily that the Museum's record probably isn't much better.

Women artists are not taken seriously if they are also married, if they work at some other job to support themselves--such as gallery assistant,--if they act at all aggressive or pushy.

Women's work is not sold in the same way men's is. Recently a Baltimore art gallery owner who happens to be a woman told me, "You know I never thought of it before but when I go to New York to buy prints, I'm hardly ever offered work by women artists." "Click!" as someone wrote a while back. Another aware woman!

Women don't get reviews the way men do. Last spring Tamarind Lithography Workshop in California published a study of art coverage in major newspapers and art journals--and found to no one's surprise that women artists received hardly any coverage at all. The reviewers and journals surveyed were quick to explain that if there were no shows there couldn't be any reviews--which only made a vicious circle seem even more vicious.

So there is that traditional level of recognition for concrete achievement which beckons to most artists--male as well as female. This was clear at the Corcoran Conference when the general discussion sessions degenerated almost immediately into attacks on the critics and museum people on the panel. Never mind those people were sisters. The business of art was all important to the artists speaking, and understandably so. Making it in the art world is a complex, confusing and almost in explicable process having more to do with luck, with being in the right place at the right time, with knowing the right people, with making the right kind of art at the right time than it does with any special, innate, or demonstrated ability. The system of critics, galleries, museums, prizes, etc., is so strong that it is not only understandable but expectable that artists "sound-off" whenever they get near any organs or apparent organs of that system.

Getting things done on that traditional level obviously has first priority. It means survival. It also means that any artist undergoes a severe test, a wrenching of personality in the face of both temptation and impossibility. Any artist doing any kind of art worth presenting to the public wants that public to see, know, and judge that art. And "making it" in that traditional, conventional, tough art world is, as of now, the way to do that.

The women's movement could be a way to change some of that, and that is why I ask that question. What do women really want in the art world? A Continuation of the embittering, soul-searching survival of the fittest system that pertains now or something better, access to an art system producing saleable art for people with money to buy it--or something better?

"Women in the Arts," the group responsible for "Women Choose Women" wants recognition on that first traditional level. There's no question that they want 'a world in which men and women artists can function as equals."

"We've pointed out to the museum people," Ce Roser, a WIA member says, that they never get to see a representative selection of women's work because the commercial galleries' only criteria is busi-



ness. Women have the reputation of being hard to deal with and hard to sell. We feel that so far we've raised their consciousness to the degree where they at least recognize that they have a bias."

That will be a much longer, harder task than the already seemingly insurmountable one of getting women equal treatment. Having more people involved in the selection process, in the decisions about who shows in museum exhibits and who doesn't, in decisions about merit and aesthetic quality over sex or race, is a first step an important one.

Getting rid of the commercial values that lie behind so much of the current art world structure will be much more difficult.

What comes after those two steps is too far in the future to be explained. Some people even think that when the society that now encourages artists to make art for collectors to buy or to do events for collectors to commission is changed so much that money and art are no longer linked, art itself will become so different in response to the change we will not recognize it. Perhaps there will be no more paintings to be auctioned at expensive auction houses, no more sculptures, prints, or drawings--or perhaps artists will do these things for love and joy alone.■

Tuning Out Women Composers

Judith Steinberg, New York

Unlike the other arts, in music there is an apparent hostility to women. Names of famous writers, artists, and poets spring to mind, but we wonder if such anomalous creatures as women composers have ever existed.

Yet there have been innumerable women who have composed excellent music, if we can believe the opinions of their contemporaries. Marie de France (14th c.), Barbara Strozzi, Tarquinia Molza, Francesca Caccini (15-16th c.), Louise Couperin (18th c.), Clara Schumann and Cecile Chaminade (19th c.) were all well-known in their own times, although overlooked in ours.

It is history as it is currently written that hides these women from view. The fate of an outstanding American composer is an excellent case in point--Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901-1953). Crawford-Seeger was one of the musical avant-garde during the 1920's and 1930's and became the first woman to win a Guggenheim award for composition in 1930. Her music has won praise from its few listeners and its originality has caused one influential critic to call her "one of the few independent innovators in American music."² Procedures created by her are now "the exclusive basis of a certain European composer who has acquired international fame as a remarkable innovator . . . but they do not show any marked advance in technical complexity and certainly none in musical interest compared with . . .³ pieces written by Miss Crawford thirty years ago."

Thus today other male composers receive credit for her work, other contemporaries of hers like Henry Cowell and Carl Ruggles receive their appropriate historical due, while Ruth Crawford Seeger is written out of history. And her music--her masterpiece, the string quartet (1931) among them--none of it is currently in print.

If Crawford-Seeger's music disappeared in just a few decades, no wonder we know so little of our past. Ignored in the mainstream of music history, women composers are treated like historical curiosities. Except for a few compositions reprinted in old collections, their music is inaccessible. Very little has been recorded. Only 24 out of 1000 extries from the current Schwann catalogue are recordings of music by women composers. Only two records represent music written before 1900.

There would be no comfort in claiming that music of the quality of Bach or Beethoven lies buried in the lists of women composers which fill the appendices of such books as Women's Work in Music or Woman in Music. Nevertheless, it is difficult to believe that

in all of those long-forgotten names (about 300 women composers listed before 1900), there are only two women whose music is worth listening to today. Their reputations in their own lifetimes justify such skepticism.

Arguments about women's alleged inferiority in creating music frequently appeal to such personality attributes as lack of emotional stability or aggressiveness. Such a simplistic approach to the development of culture overlooks the sociological nature of art. The creation of art is like any other human activity in that it is influenced by social factors. Society cannot, of course, determine which individuals will possess genius; it can determine which classes will have access to those conditions necessary for the creation of art.

Music, even more than literature or painting, is affected by social institutions. Its life depends not just on composers, but on socially organized performing units known as ensembles or orchestras, and until the advent of the phonograph, upon socially organized mass consumption known as concerts. No one can become a professional musician in an Emily Dickinson attic.

Women have suffered social inequities in the arts. Those women who have become or are composers move in a male-dominated profession replete with its own forms of institutional discrimination and prejudiced beliefs. This brief article will not attempt to "correct" centuries of music history; it only hopes to suggest the scope of sexual discrimination by focusing on three examples.

I. THE CASTRATO

The Catholic Church has long maintained a taboo against women performing in church. From the fourth century on, boy sopranos sang the high voice parts in church choirs and dressed up as women to portray female roles in liturgical drama. Given such institutional animosity, it is small wonder that we know of no great masses or motets written by women.

In the fifteenth century, the church castrated young boys in order to preserve the soprano range of their voices. This practice, confined to Italy, produced the phenomenon of the castrato virtuoso, an adult male whose voice possessed enormous strength in addition to a mezzo-soprano or soprano range.

Apparently, it was preferable to castrate young boys than to allow women to sing in church. What is even more surprising, however, is the extent to which castration was practiced outside of the church for such non-religious music as opera. The Castrati

roles were written into most Italian 17th and 18th century operas.

In one sense the practical aspects of the situation made the use of castrati almost inevitable in opera. The Church, even in the 17th century, did not allow women to appear on stage and male church singers were the most professionally trained. It was a natural step to take the castrato from the church choirs and transfer him to the operatic stage.

Exactly why this practice persisted for two centuries, however, is not so easily understood. Despite opposition of the church, women were becoming professional singers during this period. Therefore, the popularity of castrati increased though there were women who could and did sing the very same parts. We cannot discount the special appeal that castrato voices had, for even the great composers Handel and Scarlatti wrote music for them.

Nevertheless, the entire practice, including its transfer from religious to operatic music, conveys the extent to which society would go to keep women off the concert stage. According to one 17th-century connoisseur: "Nothing in all music is so beautiful as the fresh young voice of a castrato. No woman's voice has the same firmness, sweetness, and strength."⁴

II. MUSIC AS A FEMININE ACCOMPLISHMENT

The type of education in which music is a social accomplishment or wifely duty is hardly equivalent to one that imposes professional aspirations and standards. Indeed, an approach to art in which amateurism is the explicit goal is hostile to true creativity. Therefore, when music became a social accomplishment for women, it was inevitably accompanied by superficiality.

Such an approach to music was part of the Renaissance court life. But in the 18th and 19th centuries, these attitudes held sway. In a sense, the Victorian climate regarded music and sex in the same light: both were activities that women did out of a "sense of duty" and neither were intended to be enjoyed for its own sake.

Playing instruments, particularly keyboard instruments, was the accepted way for a young lady to spend idle time; one could stay at home to play the piano and look pretty doing it. Music was:

such an elegant accomplishment in itself! Such a constant source of innocent amusement! Putting everything else out of the question, I should wish my daughter to have every possible accomplishment; because accomplishments are such charming resources for young women, they keep them out of harm's way, they make a vast deal of their idle time pass so pleasantly to themselves and to others! ⁵This is my chief reason for liking them.

Thus the kind of musical education women received and the spirit in which it was given was one effective way of thwarting serious ambitions. The limits of women's involvements with music were clearly defined; to exceed them would be to defeat the very purpose for which they were initially acquired.

Therefore, the increase in numbers of women receiving musical educations did not stop discrimination against them, not encourage true artistic achievement. On the contrary, it produced social paradoxes of which women were the victims. The more women conformed to social pressure to take up music as an accomplishment, the more open they were to the charge of "dilettantism." The more women became musically educated, the less seriously society regarded them. No matter how devoted the individual woman may have been, she could always be judged by social rather than artistic criteria. Thus the failure of one woman pianist was "that she did not LOOK pretty. People laughed at her before she began. Too true! that dress makes the woman."⁶

The treatment of music as a proper feminine past-time carried over even into this century. Women's magazines such as the Ladies' Home Journal supplied its readership with columns on how to teach music to one's children, the best buys in musical instruments and fiction with musical themes. They even sponsored song writing contests. Playing the piano or writing a parlor song was equivalent to becoming a good cook. As for serious professional goals, music was a means to marriage not its substitute.

A story entitled "Two Violins--A Tale of Divine Harmony" that appeared in a 1905 issue of the Journal concludes with the heroine's classic renunciation of professional ambitions. Her own concert career was destroyed through injury to her arm, but what matter; married to a violinist she is

. . . restless no longer. Your success, your genius is enough now. All my thwarted ambitions are merged in yours, all my longings are stilled. I shall be content to go about with you," she dropped her eyes shyly. "It will be you who give the concerts, who will bring the world to your feet--but I--what shall I care if I can be there to see, if I can know that the heart of the great violinist rests in mine?"

III. SEXUAL AESTHETICS

Sexual aesthetics are opinions or ideas about works of art that use sexual criteria as values. The most damaging sexual aesthetics that came to fashion during the 19th century was that good music was masculine and bad music was feminine. The composer and influential music critic, Robert Schumann, occasionally wrote about music in these terms. He called the music of his contemporary Spohr "soft and effeminate" while those composers who "aim at emotional effects ought to be punished by being dressed in women's clothes."⁷ Schumann's comments could be reduced to an axiom of sexual criticism; those composers who write bad (that is "emotionally exploitive") music are not only bad composers, but are falsifying their masculine identities.

But what if the composer happens to be a woman--like Clara Wieck; Schumann's wife. Wieck, one of the foremost musicians of her time, was a child protegee with an international reputation as a concert pianist and consummate musician. That she was also a gifted and talented composer there can be no doubt. Unfortu-

nately for her own development, she was always comparing herself to her husband and more importantly, had internalized the sexual aesthetics of her age.

When she completed her Trio in G minor, for example, she wrote "there is nothing greater than the joy of composing something oneself and then listening to it." A year later when she received a published print of the work she disparaged it. After comparing it with Robert's trio, hers sounded "effeminate and sentimental." That a woman composer should criticize her own work in those terms suggests that the act of composing was seen as alien to the feminine nature.

On the other hand, the notion that good music was "virile" was simply taken as a critical axiom--self-evident to writers a half-century later. It was a part of the critical vocabulary of American critics, for example, at the end of the century.

The decades 1890-1910 saw the appearance of a number of books and articles that dealt with the contributions or defects of women composers. The issue became salient at this time because of the large number of American women who were writing songs and piano music. The sexual aesthetics is all too apparent. Sison in Women's Work in Music, 1902:

It is doubtful whether women will excel naturally in the more virile vein of Bruch's cantatas . . . even in the larger forms (symphonies and operas) women's work in music will be to some extent lacking in the broader effects of strong feeling.

Robert Hughes in Contemporary Composers, 1900: Her work is not masculine--it is devoid of meretriciousness and of any seeking after virility.

The pseudo-psychology of these statements formulated the classical double-bind that is all too familiar today; when women composer in the smaller forms (such as songs and salon piano pieces) they are being true to their natures and thereby demonstrating their sexually derived inadequacies to think in the larger abstract forms. If on the other hand, they do attempt the larger forms, they are betraying their sexual identities in attempting to write "man-tone" music. If they succeed in writing good man-tone music, they are thereby being unfeminine and behaving like men.

The clearest display of reactionary criticism appeared in 1894 in an article entitled "Is the Music Idea Masculine" by Edith Brower. Writing for the Atlantic Monthly, Brower attempted to resolve the philosophical paradox about music and women. Simply stated, the paradox was that if music was the art of feeling, why cannot women, those creatures of emotion, not compose it? Her answers are worthy of Freud: Women only appear to be more emotional--in fact they are just more nervous:

...woman as the lesser man is comparatively deficient in active emotional force, she cannot for that reason produce that which is the highest and strongest of all modes of emotional expression.

...Much of what passes in women for true emotion is mere nervous excitability. Women's finer

frailer organization subjected to constant demands from her nervous system would be torn to pieces were her emotions excessively powerful.

...Wagner's operas and Beethoven's symphonies are good examples of the kind of music women can't write because of their lack of emotional power.

Ironically, Brower's paragon male composer, Wagner, was later accused of being "effeminate" by no less a composer than Charles Ives. In his private manuscripts Ives called him a "soft-bodied sensualist=pussy", an epithet that exposes the absurdity of talking about music in terms of sex.

Forms like symphonies and operas are not inherently masculine; forms like the art-song are not inherently feminine. There is no such thing as man-tone music. But sexual aesthetics is only another way in which social patterns of discrimination against women in music were translated into psychological and philosophical statements that pretended to scholarly objectivity.

Women composers are still considered anomalies in our century. When Lili Boulanger won the Prix de Rome in 1918, she was disqualified from receiving the prize because of her sex. There are still no women conducting major symphonies, nor are hiring opportunities for symphony musicians impartial. Some conductors like Arthur Fiedler of the Boston Pops Orchestra, do not accept women at all.

Perhaps the most substantive issue with respect to women composers is the lack of equal opportunities for the performance of their music. This point was made in a recent article by Pauline Cliveros, a contemporary composer working at the Electronic Music Center in San Diego. Writing in the New York Times, October, 1970, she stated that women have to work much harder to achieve recognition as artists in this society. The National Federation of Music Clubs also have recognized women's greater struggle. They have compiled a Directory of American Women Composers that was deliberately designed to:

add to the recognition and performance of American women composers, who along with other women of the world, aspire to more than their traditional occupations as propagators and drudges for mankind.■

FOOTNOTES

1. New York Times, Sept. 13, 1970.
2. George Perle, "Atonality and the Twelve-note System in the United States," The Score (London), No. 27 (July. 1960).
3. Ibid.
4. Francis Rogers, "The Male Soprano," Musical Quarterly, 1919, 4.
5. Maria Edgeworth, Practical Education, 1798. Quoted in Arthur Loesser, Men, Women and Pianos.
6. Amy Fay, Music Study in Germany, 1874.
7. Robert Schumann, On Music and Musicians, ed. Konrad Wolff, trans. Paul Rosenfeld. (New York, McGraw Hill, 1964, 71).

OLD MISTRESSES: Women Artists of the Past

Ann Gabhart & Elizabeth Broun, Baltimore

Old Mistresses: Women Artists of the Past, an exhibition of paintings, sculpture, enamels, and miniatures by women artists in Europe and America, was held at the Walters Art Gallery from April 17 through June 18, 1972. It coincided with the Conference for Women in the Visual Arts held at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington. Both events were part of an effort to understand the achievements, the problems, and the conflicts of women working in the visual arts. The following article is taken from the Walters Art Gallery Bulletin, April, 1972.

The title of the current exhibition alludes to the unspoken assumption in our language that art is created by men. The reverential term "old master" has no meaningful feminine equivalent; when cast in its feminine form, "old mistress," the connotation is altogether different, to say the least. This sexual bias in language reflects a similar bias in attitudes and behavior. Since the art-making role was traditionally regarded as male, women seem to have had difficulties seeing themselves as artists without seriously undermining their identities as women.

The present exhibition is an attempt to recognize those women who have dealt with this problem and produced work of real merit. It also provides the opportunity to examine whether women artists felt a conflict between their lives as women and as professional artists. Most of the works shown range from the sixteenth through the early twentieth centuries. Many are of superb quality; still none can match the masterpieces that could be included in an exhibition open to men of the same period. There is no feminine counterpart here for such towering figures as Raphael, Donatello, Rubens, Michelangelo, Goya, Manet, or Cézanne. Acknowledging at the outset that this is the case, we must also admit that the reasons for this lack of female genius in the visual arts are just beginning to be sought by art historians.

In some cases it has been shown that the best works by some women have been falsely attributed to men. Critics, too, have been guilty of judging women's work as a separate category, so that the highest honor a woman could achieve was "best woman artist." In

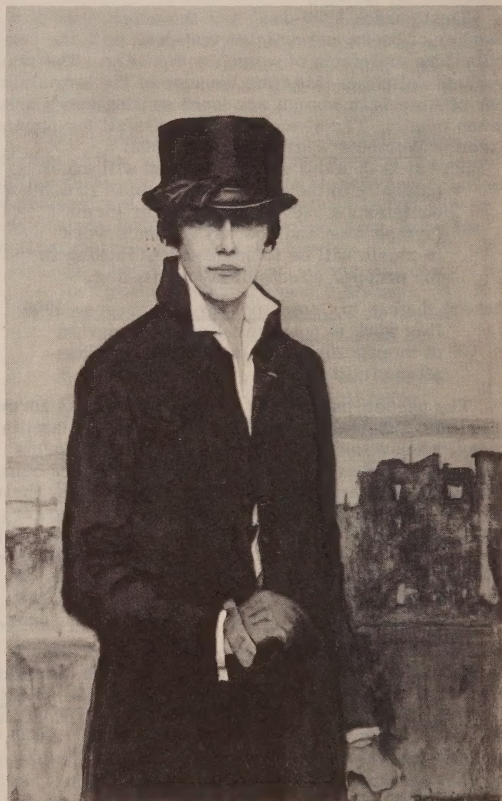


Fig. 1 Romaine Brooks, "Self-Portrait"

the past, women have been encouraged to work in media such as watercolor and pastel, and in subjects such as still lifes and portrait miniatures, which do not lend themselves to ambitious projects. Fine-arts academies in America denied entrance to women students until the latter part of the nineteenth century.

All these observations, however, while interesting as evidence of a double standard, do not suffice to explain the lack of a tradition of women artists of the first rank, for most male artists too had obstacles to overcome in their careers. Women, however, have had an additional problem in dealing with the obstacles, for by assuming a role defined as masculine, their identities as women were jeopardized. Surely the most unusual case is Romaine Brooks (1874-1970) who after an extremely unhappy childhood assumed a completely male identity. Though we cannot know whether her decision to be an artist contributed to this situation or merely reflected it, she became one of the strongest of all women painters, as evidenced in her striking self-portrait, the most recent work in the exhibition (fig. 1). It should be useful, then, to look briefly at the lives and careers of three of the thirty "old mistresses" represented in this exhibition.

By 1615, Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-c. 1651) had become a major exponent of the style of Caravaggio in Rome. Her subsequent career was long and influential, and she must be counted among the principal sources of Florentine and Neapolitan painting in the second quarter of the century. A glance through her surviving work instantly reveals that Artemisia was one of the first women artists to engage herself with the subject of women. She almost exclusively represents figures such as Susannah, Lucretia, Bathsheba, Cleopatra, Mary Magdalene, Minerva, Esther, the Muses, and a female personification of Fame. Artemisia depicts her women not as traditionally beautiful, but as strong, robust, seemingly contemporary figures who dominate the compositions and are always in control of their situations.

It is, however, in Artemisia's depiction of the theme of Judith and Holofernes (fig. 2) that one finds such an intense preoccupation with the subject that it seems different in nature from her other work. Her earliest known pictures represent this subject, and the five other known versions which she produced throughout her career testify to her abiding interest in it. While she was one of many artists painting this theme, her particular treatment of it reveals an intensity unseen in versions by any of her contemporaries. In her father Orazio's famous, lyrical version at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, for which Artemisia herself posed as Judith, a serene and trusting heroine looks to God after an act which is seen as spiritual and heroic. Caravaggio himself in his youth portrayed the moment of decapitation, but in his work Judith's participation is reluctant and ritualistic compared to the violence and grim determination of Judith in Artemisia's version, now in the Uffizi, which is actually based on Caravaggio's work. Even when she represents the scene after the decapitation, as in the picture lent to this exhibition by the Detroit Institute of Arts, she records a specific moment in the bloody event. Judith's sword is still raised as she and her servant pause in the darkened tent before putting Holofernes' head into a meat sack, and the moment is dramatized by the light of a flickering candle. There is an immediacy and an emphasis on the physical act not found in other versions of the subject. Divested of its heroic and spiritual dimensions and performed by a clearly contemporary woman,

the act becomes a butchery rather than a symbol.

This aspect of Artemisia's work seems to follow from her own experiences, particularly a lawsuit in which she was the principal witness when she was nineteen. In 1612 her father filed charges against Agostino Tassi, his collaborator and her tutor, for having raped her many, many times. In the course of the subsequent trial, Artemisia testified that after the initial rape Tassi had tried to pacify her by talking of marriage, and that she had then regarded herself as his wife. When she was tortured with thumbscrews during cross-examination, she called out to him, "This is the ring you gave me, and these are your promises." The case lasted several months, creating a scandal in Rome. After it was finished, Artemisia was quickly married to a respectable Florentine.

Although the sensational aspects of her life have frequently been observed, no serious study has been made of the links between her imagery and her experiences. What would seem to be an obsessive repetition of the theme of Judith decapitating Holofernes is not to be explained by its general popularity. The speculation is inescapable that these contemporary Judiths, who perform their bloody tasks with such ferocious energy and total concentration, represent Artemisia herself wreaking vengeance on men.

Artemisia continued to be a highly productive painter, but apparently her situation as a wife proved less satisfactory. She seems to have left her husband, possibly when she went to Rome around 1615, for in 1637 she inquired in a letter to a friend if he was still alive.

The eighteenth century provided the most congenial atmosphere for the work of women artists. Marie-Louise Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun describes in her me-



Detroit Institute of Arts/Gift of Leslie H. Green

Fig. 2 Artemisia Gentileschi, "Judith with the Head of Holofernes"



Fig. 3 Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, "The Artist with Two Pupils"

moirs of 1835 the pleasurable life of the French aristocracy before the Revolution: "It is very difficult to convey an idea today of the urbanity, the graceful ease, in a word the affability of manner which made the charm of Parisian society forty years ago. The women reigned then; the Revolution dethroned them." While it was true that women of the eighteenth century had considerably more freedom than they did after the Revolution, in fact they had no real authority. They reigned through the salon and the boudoir, and were able in this manner to exert significant influence on contemporary political and social life. In the artistic sphere there was a proliferation of women painters. Adélaïde Labille-Guiard (1749-1803) was perhaps the best of them. Contemporary accounts of Labille-Guiard's paintings always refer to their vigor and firmness of drawing which, as was often noted, characterize the works of men. She was plagued on many occasions by those suspecting that her work was too good to be hers alone. Such slander threatened her acceptance into the Royal Academy, and she decided to disprove the charges by painting portraits of the academicians in their presence, so each could see for himself that she worked alone. Still, her most remarkable canvas, a self-portrait now in the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 3) was met with disbelief from the critics who cried, "Mais c'est un homme que cette femme-là." [But this woman is a man!] An unidentified woman, evidently progressive for her time, responded to this statement in a local journal: "It's as if my sex were eternally damned to mediocrity; as if its works were to carry always the stamp of weakness and ignorance."

Labille-Guiard fought the discrimination she found

amidst her colleagues, especially in the Royal Academy, to which she was admitted in 1783. Although the Academy had accepted its first woman member, Rosalba Carriera, as early as 1720, it remained essentially a men's club. By the end of the century, the increasing number of women artists jeopardized this tradition, so the king decreed that at no time could there be more than four women academicians. Labille-Guiard successfully challenged this rule in 1790, as well as one which prohibited women from being professors in the schools. The Royal Academy, however, dissolved the following year, when all things royal fell from favor; when reconstituted in 1795 as the Academy of Fine Arts, it was decided there should be no female members at all. That, of course, eliminated the problem of female dissidents altogether and lends credence to Vigée's notion the Revolution "dethroned" women.

With an instinct toward dividing the opposition, the Paris art world established a rivalry between Vigée and Labille; their pictures often hung side by side in the Salon; they were considered for admission to the Royal Academy at the same time and accepted on the same day; and they were compared to Venus and Diana. Lewd pamphlets circulated about their private lives and bawdy poems appeared, along with only slightly less libelous critical reviews. Vigée's portrait of a man, said one coy critic, showed that she was truly "mistress of her subject"; it revealed an "intimate" knowledge of the sitter. Unfortunately, for these as well as many other women artists, fame and infamy entered through the same door. As Labille's notoriety declined, so did her recognition as a painter. Only now is she being rediscovered as one of the great artists of the century.

In America, the foremost female painter was Mary Cassatt (1844-1926). She left Philadelphia at twenty-two to study in Europe, finally settling in Paris to work with Degas and the Impressionists. Her relationship with Degas, however, was frequently troubled by his well-known vitriolic temperament and her own stubborn refusal to give in to domination. He admired her work immensely, but his appreciation was often colored by his misogyny. Upon seeing her group of prints called "La Toilette," he remarked, "I will not admit that a woman can draw so well," surely the epitome of back-handed compliments. She stood up to Degas, but she always was both dependent on and fearful of his opinion. She said, "Degas is a pessimist, and dissolves one so that you feel after being with him--oh, why try, since nothing can be done."

Although Cassatt's father had been strictly against her sojourn in Europe, shortly after she settled in Paris he forgot his misgivings and brought the entire family to live with her. For the next eighteen years she assumed a major portion of the responsibility for the family, caring for her diseased sister, taking her invalid mother on long trips to better climates, and interrupting her work for weeks at a time to oversee their numerous moves from one neighborhood to another. Her family seemed to feel no reluctance about interfering with her work, for they continued to think of her more as an accomplished dilettante than a serious professional. When her reputation as one of America's finest painters was securely established, her mother, who refused to see Mary's painting as more than a

pastime, wrote about her, "After all a woman who is not married is lucky if she has a decided love for work of any kind and the more absorbing it is the better."

Nor had Cassatt herself completely escaped the idea that husband and children were essential to a woman. In the middle of the 1880's, as she reached her forties, she began to do the many studies of mothers and children for which she is famous, and which account for about a third of her production. Her preoccupation with the maternal theme grew until it eclipsed the artistic consideration in her work. Although throughout her life she dealt with formal pictorial problems in a highly professional way, first in copies of the old masters, then in experiments with Japanese styles (fig. 4) and printing techniques, her pictures of mothers and children and those of children by themselves are with few exceptions weak and undeveloped.

Contemporary critics praised these works because of their fresh depiction of maternity, divested of the allegorical or religious overtones in Victorian representations of the theme. This critical view has persisted to our day. But in fact, Cassatt focuses entirely on one aspect of the maternal relationship. In almost every instance the infant is held in the mother's close embrace; the energy of a child at play is never shown. In these pictures she replaces the sentimentality of previous representations by a relationship of passive mutual dependence between mother and child. In view of Cassatt's involvement with this theme throughout her mature career, it is not surprising to find her toward the end of her life confiding to a friend that she failed as a woman because she never married and had children. We can only speculate to what extent her repetition of maternal themes may have been a substitute for the children she never bore.

It is significant in this context that during the time of her greatest preoccupation with maternal themes, her powers as a painter were not so diminished when she turned to other subjects. In 1891 she received a commission to paint a mural representing "Modern Woman" for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Her family interrupted her work on this project too; she wrote to Mrs. Potter Palmer, the chairwoman of the Women's Committee, to explain the delays, "As if by a 'fait expres' all my relations seem to have given each other rendezvous in Paris this summer and one cannot exactly refuse to see them."

The mural was eventually finished and installed at the exhibition. Mary Fairchild McMonnies, who had done the opposing tympanum portraying "Primitive Woman," reaped praise for her subject:

On the extreme right we have a single male figure, a hunter clad in skins--he has just returned from the chase. A group of women and children bear away the game he has killed and minister to his wants. A kneeling girl crushes a bunch of grapes into his cup to refresh the tawny giant. In the middle group--ing we have woman, the bearer of burdens, typified by a band of girls carrying water jars . . . On the extreme left we see the sturdy daughter of the plow driving a yoke of milk-white oxen.

Cassatt's mural met with stony disapproval or indiffer-



Fig. 4 Mary Cassatt, "Young Woman in Black"

ence. She had devised an image of modern woman as a self-sufficient individual, devoted to learning, success, and the arts--an image which described her own life as well. The central panel depicted "Young Women Plucking the Fruits of Knowledge and Science," a subject with thinly-veiled allusions to the story of Eve in the Garden. On the right panel three girls are engaged in singing, playing a banjo, and dancing with lifted skirts, presenting a frivolous contrast to their primitive sisters behind the plow. On the left, three girls trailed by geese eagerly pursue an allegorical figure of Fame. Critics and visitors agreed that "Primitive Woman" was the more gratifying image of the two.

Though she remained strongly attached to America and considered it home, Cassatt's achievements were never acknowledged here as they were in France. When she returned for a visit at the height of her career, the *Philadelphia Ledger* included a notice which showed more than the city's usual indifference to native artists. It refused to treat her as a serious painter at all:

Mary Cassatt, sister of Mr. Cassatt president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, returned from Europe yesterday. She has been studying painting in France and owns the smallest Pekinese dog in the world.

It is hoped that this exhibition will promote a serious consideration of the creativity of women. The issue is one of enormous complexity and it must be admitted that no one theory can explain the relative shortage of great women artists or the widely differing ways in which each woman represented here dealt with her situation. Women artists today, in the widening conviction that the creation of art need not remain the province of men, are learning to resolve the conflicts of the past, and to take themselves seriously both as women and as artists.■

rape: the response

OUR Sisters Speak

I was very disappointed in your piece "Rape: the Experience." This article was damaging to the thousands of women who have had the terrible experience and were hurt and terrified by the violation itself.

From the beginning "Anonymous" lets us know she is used to lots of meaningless sex, going to bed with guys she doesn't like, adding "what girl hasn't?" This attitude is more typical of the sexual revolution as advertised in *Cosmopolitan* than the enlightened course that women are striving for--the right to be free to say no.

I may be naive in not agreeing with Anonymous that on a warm sunny day most women get the urge to crawl into the weeds and screw. This is, among other things, putting oneself in an extremely vulnerable position. The large number of women who are raped are usually involved in more "innocent" activities--walking home from work, sitting in their apartment, etc.

Next we are informed that the rape itself wasn't so bad, but being held at gunpoint was. If this is the point being made, the article might as well have been about holdups or muggings. Of course the police were the very worst part of the experience, as usual, but Anonymous lets us in on the fact that she has a much more exciting sex life than they do, pitying their lack of imagination when they question her description of the act. With the extra added "social taboo" of being involved in an adulterous inter-racial affair, the article has the ring of a tabloid story itself. Poor Anonymous can no longer go in the weeds without shuddering, and is too "ashamed" to sign the article. Surely rape is nothing for the victim to be ashamed of--it must be something else that embarrasses Anonymous. I think it might do her good to stay out of the weeds for a while.

I hope this is not misunderstood. I have nothing but anger for rapists and solidarity and sympathy for my sisters. I wish you would have included an article that dealt more with the real problem than what seemed to be just an annoying incident for Anonymous. I still have sympathy for her, and she is most definitely in the right. The pathetic thing is that this account tends to support the public opinion of women who are victims of rape, and is unlikely to win any understanding or support.

Pat Anderson, Chicago, Ill.

Members of the Rape Crisis Center in Washington, D. C., were very distraught after reading the articles dealing with rape in the issue on Sexuality. We feel the inclusion of these articles under the topic of sexuality perpetuates the male definition of rape as a sexual act. Rape is an institutionalized act of power, aggression and terror performed by men against women. We want to stress the importance of destroying the myth of rape as a sexual act. Through our experiences we know that it was the threat of violence and possible death that terrified us, not the physical act of intercourse.

In Debbie Margolin's article "Rape: The Facts", she states "contrary to the belief that only 'bad' girls are raped, a survey in the District of Columbia revealed that 82% of rape victims had 'good' reputations". This does not challenge the male value-judgement that there are 'good' women and 'bad' women. The implication of the survey is that rape will be dealt with only when 'good' women are raped. Another statistic cited is "Eighty percent of the men have only 7 years of schooling". Statistics on rape are based only on reported rapes which are estimated by the FBI at 5 to 20 percent of all rapes. The use of this statistic assumes that only lower class men rape and neglects the fact that while middle and upper class men rape, these rapes are infrequently reported and very rarely result in convictions due to the man's increased power and status in society. Also, false accusations of rape were said to be 20 percent: "most of these are detected right away"--due to police intimidation many women do not press charges and these are interpreted as false reports.

The issue of rape is increasingly becoming a major focus of the women's movement. History has taught us that single issue movements are doomed to destruction once that single issue has been dealt with. Inherent in our liberation is the end of rape, but the end of rape is not total liberation.

In Ann Sheldon's article, "Rape: A Solution", she begins to defy the myth that men rape due to frustration arising from their impotence, but then gives the myth validity by brushing it aside as a "limp red herring"--a phrase that connotes the statement is true.

but we're tired of hearing it.

Increasing numbers of women are developing self-defense skills. The psychological readiness to react to aggression is formed by the continuous development and strengthening of our bodies through basic self-defense tactics, judo, and karate. The possession of weapons does not give us the mind-set to use them; if taken from us, we are left not only undefended, but also in an even more vulnerable position by virtue of the fact that the weapon may be used against us. It is a privilege denied to the majority of women to have the financial means to own guns and other weapons and to have the time and resources to develop the ability to use them. To offer this as a method for all women to use to deal with rape, is a classist position. Many women are offering self-defense lessons to other women free of charge. To attempt running and screaming is never futile. Until women learn self-defense, have access to weapons and are prepared to use them, running and screaming are our only defenses.

"Most rapists were taught in school by women who urged the virtues of being good boys." This statement removes the guilt from men and places it once again upon women. There is no place for martyrdom within the women's movement. The concept that we may resist and be overpowered consequently dying as "free women" is completely absurd. For obvious reasons it is not a solution to rape.

Women have been kept powerless through isolation, thus having to develop individual solutions to their oppression. You do not have to do it yourself! Collectively, we are creating solutions to rape. The Rape Crisis Center is one such collective action. We are a volunteer group of women who staff a 24 hour crisis phone for women who have been raped or attacked. As a result of our own experience we recognize the necessity of women supporting women. We provide this support for those women who call us. We will accompany a woman to the police station or to court if she wants. However, realizing the emotional strain of reporting this crime, we do not take a position that it is necessary to report it. The decision must be made by the individual women. We support and provide the same services regardless of her decision. These services are legal, medical, and psychiatric information and referrals, explanations of police and court procedures and emergency housing. Both to educate women about rape, the needs and reactions of the rape victim and the politics of rape and to give women an opportunity to discuss their experiences with other victims, we coordinate seminars and direct conferences.

Women's groups across the country and abroad have contacted us for information on starting rape crisis centers in their areas. To provide concrete information, we have a pamphlet "How to Start a Rape Crisis Center" available. We ask a \$1.25 donation to cover printing and postal expenses. For more information write P.O. Box 21005; Washington, D.C. 20009, or call (202) 333-RAPE.

The Rape Crisis Center Collective

against equality

Despite all the feuds and factions which have surfaced in movement media the last three years, a consensus remains. Everyone wants equality between the sexes... But hardly anyone bothers to support the contention that women need equality. This premise remains unexamined and unsubstantiated in Women's Liberation literature. In addition, most gloss over the gross power differential between the sexes. It is not male power they rail against. It is inequality...

Also mistakenly, when these egalitarians try to compare the situations of oppressors and oppressed, they assume that situations which can be called by the same name, are really equivalent. Nominal identity passes for empirical identity. I will call this confusion the "semantic identity fallacy," one which obscures women's predicament and obstructs real change.

Under the semantic identity fallacy, it may be argued that whoever returns violence for violence behaves the same way as the attacker. But this ignores power differentials. Where one group dominates another, any semblances of equality between the two are spurious. For the same actions, done by victim and master, occur in different political contexts and have different political implications. Consequently, though they may be subsumed under the same label, they really mean different things. The same for violence. The dominant group, already ensconced in a superior position, used violence to maintain or extend its capacity for exploitation. The subordinate group, on the other hand, uses violence to win self-determination in a situation where few other means exist. The two cases are clearly not the same; in all but name they differ...

According to egalitarians, we women should discard whatever advantages we have over men--fight protective legislation, submit to the draft, refuse alimony, refrain from manipulation, and pay our own way. Second, we should not seek new advantages. Equal time, equal pay, equal work are fine. We ought not demand more. Third, keep it cool. Be nice, be polite, be friendly. Do unto others.

Now let's set it straight. It is true women have certain advantages over men. And men have advantages over women, and under the semantic identity fallacy, both cases are similarly unjust. But in fact the situations differ. Though egalitarians may trace our present dilemma to feminine prerogatives, the problem is not that we have too much privilege; the problem is that we have too little power.

It is true that women are allowed to behave in certain ways men aren't. We can ask men for protection. We can wheedle--because we can't demand. We can cry--because shouting doesn't work. The truth is,

women receive such dispensations precisely because we lack power. I willingly concede to men the right to this kind of servile behavior. But I doubt they will exercise this right until they are in fact subservient. Then, and only then, will masculinity become a matter for tears. No, being on the bottom may have its good points, but they do not compare with the advantages of being on top. Let men give up their privileges first. They can afford to.

At present men monopolize most power bases. The egalitarian principle would require us to fight for parity base by base, careful never to go more than half-way. At that rate, we'd be fighting forever. And in the meantime, what good would a few 50% set-ups do us, against all the 90% set-ups men control? Imagine a group of revolutionaries which refused to steal more than half the rifles from any one army!

...Women must obtain power as a group, as women. And that means: must obtain it in relation to men. Must acquire superior power, in other words. We want power as a group because we want power as a group. It's that simple. No woman can show men her goodness-of-heart by claiming to act for Humanity, can enlist them by claiming a feminist revolution is in their best interests. They're not fools. Someone's going to be on top. Why let it be men? So we can keep our hearts pure?

Revenge is, after all, a legitimate emotion and a reasonable strategy. Legitimate, because reparations have symbolic importance. They signify the fact that sexism is not one isolated event, happening only right now, but a historical phenomenon, with a long past and a buttress in every institution which now exists.

Strategically, parity comes only from equal power bases. But two thousand years of sexism, or ten thousand, or whatever, is a pretty big power base. The effect it has had both on male psyches and on social structures is enormous. Just to be safe, we need a similar base; we need the time. New psychologies and institutions don't develop overnight. To create new women, and new social structures responsive to their needs, will take a couple millenia. In the meantime, we'll have to control all important power bases, just for the freedom to experiment. Proposing parity is at best premature.

A. Battleaxe
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(ed. note: If you would like the complete version of this paper, send 50¢ to cover xeroxing & mailing costs to Women: A Journal of Liberation.



S. Wallace, Baltimore

a rude awakening

Why do people get married? Why did I get married? Because everybody else was doing it.

Virginia was married, along with Betty, Dot, Bernadette, Marion and Ruth. Everybody was married. All the universe was married but me.

In a poem I once read, the poet imagined himself married to a beautiful sophisticated woman and living high up in a penthouse. Yet he couldn't imagine himself married to that prison dream. I had visions of what it would be like to have a rambling stone house on a tree-lined street with a neatly manicured lawn, and within, a happy family gathered around a glowing fireplace. What a rude awakening.

The poet I mentioned was revolting against the tradition of the wedding, the honeymoon and married life, yet ultimately he felt the need for someone to share his life when he grew old. I revolt against the dirty laundry (pee stains in the underwear), the rush for dinner, demands for spicy dishes and do this or that because "it's your job." But I don't leave because I don't want to be all alone in a furnished room.

Mary Sheppard, Baltimore

(Mary Sheppard is a forty year old civil service worker. She wrote the above for a social security English class.)

raising liberated sons

I am very much interested in people's thoughts on how to bring up the next generation to be more liberated than we are. Boys especially--it seems easier to think of bringing up a girl to consider herself a person, but how in the world do I raise my son to be less oppressive than his father?

This is a theme that runs through my life these days since my small son is one of my main concerns--a theme of many questions and mighty few answers, and I would like to hear what other sisters think, what sisters whose children are older have found.

Sounds a bit close to "women's magazines" maybe, but children are a large part of many of our lives (as they should be of their fathers' too; we don't have to imitate men by leaving the raising of our children to somebody else). Also I suspect that the only way we're going to get free, open and nonexploiting men

around is to raise them that way, so I think this is very important.

Specifically--how do we combat the effects of television and books, what are the good and bad books, what are the schools doing to them and what can we do about it, how can we find models for them when they're surrounded by role-players, etc.

I see a great deal of lip service paid to equality and our right to be our own people, along with a whole different set of unconscious expectations--he says it's fine that she's going back to school but it never occurs to him not to interrupt her studying to read bits from the paper. How, especially, can we keep our sons from turning out like that?

Adrienne F. Parker, Washington, D. C.



Donna Ariosa, Baltimore

white and of middle-class origins, we have to learn how we are used to oppress other women.)

The staff agreed that all education has politics behind it, but we were neither at a point to formulate a political program nor in sufficient political agreement to be able to do so in the near future. Thus we came to regard ourselves as an umbrella service group. This definition came about because of several factors: 1. We were friends with disagreements and were not willing, nor able, to work out the disagreements, but we did agree that wanted to see women's studies begin. 2. Previous attempts at forming study groups had failed in San Francisco, so we were uncertain as to whether there was a real need for women's studies. We did not want to make too many political choices before we knew the need and who our audience might be. 3. Individually we were unsure of what our major commitment to the women's movement was. 4. There is within the women's movement a fear and distrust of leadership of any sort. We felt that by operating as a service group for the first session and disbanding, we would not then become an established elite.

Our politics developed implicitly as well as explicitly. Many of the things that happened in Breakaway, happened not because of conscious, well-thought out strategic decisions, but as a result of an organic growth out of the needs of women. But although political decisions do not always have to be conscious to be useful or even innovative, a group can be limited by its lack of awareness of important issues. Breakaway could not do extensive outreach until more conscious thought and discussion was given to the needs of different kinds of women.

Just as neither theory nor practice can get far ahead of the other, it is likely that a women's studies program will not be able to get very far ahead of the women's movement in general. Thus the question of successful outreach for women's studies programs has a great deal to do with the amount of outreach currently happening in the women's movement.

Cathy Cade and
Tanis Walters, San Francisco

san francisco breakaway

This article is about the first San Francisco Breakaway, a women's liberation school, which was conceptualized and begun in the Spring of 1970 by women who were friends and were in the San Francisco Women's Movement. There were seven women who organized Breakaway and we are two of those women. Because of a diversity of politics and approach, we are presenting our analysis and perspective and do not speak for the entire staff.

We got together and decided to launch a women's studies program for the fall of 1970 because we wanted a work project with women and also felt that small groups, the main way in which San Francisco Women's Liberation was organized, were only partially filling our need to study about ourselves, our history, and our oppression. A "community" school was decided upon instead of trying to develop women's studies on a campus because: (1) We wanted to be autonomous from men and from sexist, racist, imperialist, corporate-liberal male institutions. (2) Outside of established institutions there is more freedom for innovation. (3) The "community" which we hoped to reach were the non-school oriented women.

We can describe our efforts to set up Breakaway in terms of the politics of our decisions. By politics we mean those values we affirm by our statements, actions and distribution of resources, e.g. time, energy, money. In our decisions these politics were sometimes explicit or conscious and sometimes implicit or unconscious. Our explicit politics were minimal: "...1. Seminars will begin with the understanding that women are oppressed and students are asked to accept this assumption. 2. Seminars will attempt to be aware of the needs, problems, and issues that affect women diversely according to racial and class background. (Racism and classism are used to divide women and thus keep us all oppressed. But in addition, since most women in Women's Liberation are

film reviews

HOLDING

Eleanor, Hartford, Conn.

The Daughters of Bilitis chapter in Boston recently showed the highly controversial Lesbian film "Holding." The 15-minute film features a real-life Lesbian couple who run naked in the sun through green fields, lie in the grass together and make love. The lovemaking scenes at the beginning of the film are overlaid with scenes of the women running together or making love at a different time and place, while the end of the film climaxes in very intense, explicit lovemaking, without the overlays.

The film is stunningly beautiful and artistically done, giving the impression that these are two women in love who have a sexual relationship that is natural and good. "Holding" shows the kind of sex that Lesbians can relate to--not the sado-masochistic sex of "Killing of Sister George", or the compulsive, sick sex of "Therese and Isabelle" and "The Fox", or the skin-flick sex of male-made films where women have sex for the titillation of straight men.

About half the DOB women, in the discussion that followed, had praise for the film and its purpose; the other half objected to it very strongly. The most vehement objection was that sex was a private matter and that it was nobody's business what Lesbians did in bed. If it were shown at DOB speaking engagements, these women felt that straights (especially men) would merely be sexually aroused.

Other women felt the film would educate straights about Lesbianism. Often the question everyone is dying to ask gay women is, "But what do you do?" The implied assumption in this unasked question is that sexual activity is impossible without a penis or a penis substitute. The question usually is never asked because of timidity or politeness.

"Holding" answers this question beautifully. It also dispels the dyke-femme, dominant-passive, role-playing myth that most straights still believe about Lesbians.

Our straight culture is saturated with heterosexuality. It is presented as the only lifestyle. All gay people know how intimidating it is to find, in books, movies, on TV, everywhere, only examples of straight sex. Besides being good for the homosexual psyche to see an example of healthy gay sex, films like "Holding" can do a lot to accustom straight people to seeing gay sex, and to shatter the mystique surrounding homosexuality as being something secret, dirty and shameful.

Ideally, of course, our culture should contain books, movies, etc. that treat gay relationships honestly and openly, as being merely another human lifestyle. This will never happen as long as gay sex remains mysterious and hidden.■

THE GIRLS

M. B., Baltimore

One of the most effective of the recent films on women's liberation is Mai Zetterling's The Girls. A Swedish film made in 1968, it was not released in the United States until four years after its production, and it is not being shown commercially even now.

The film is about three actresses on a road tour of Lysistrata, Aristophanes' comedy about women who end a war by refusing to sleep with their husbands until peace is declared. The actresses begin to see parallels with their own lives and continue their roles off-stage, denouncing female apathy and male chauvinism.

The film is effective not because it has a "correct" political line but because it is a successful work of art. It does not show us women who are economically or racially exploited. It does not show us women actually liberating themselves by attacking institutions or building alternatives. It deals exclusively with middle-class women who aren't able, in the course of the film, to act to change the conditions of their lives. Instead we participate in their fantasies about liberation and in their frustrations over making these fantasies a reality.

The way the film is structured gives us insights into why these women are unable to act. It presents the contradictions of their lives in such a way that we can participate in the process by which they discover these contradictions and attempt to come to terms with them.

By allowing us to participate in the experience of these women's lives, the film provides a different kind of perception of women's consciousness than more politically conscious films which show poor, working class, third world women talking, talking, talking about their lives, saying all the right things and doing nothing about them. Ultimately, seeing women saying the right things and still doing nothing is as frustrating as seeing women saying nothing.

Eventually we need to see as well films like Salt of the Earth which dramatize women acting to change their lives and their community. But until that kind of liberation becomes a reality in our own lives and on film, it remains illuminating to see films like The Girls which dramatize those contradictions which prevent us from acting.

Technically the film is brilliant. Women interested in film-making can rejoice in the achievement of this talented directress. Every juxtaposition, every flashback is justified psychologically as well as intellectually. Every scene is a careful balance of empathy and detachment.

Most significantly, the film captures the subtleties and intricacies of women's experience which are rarely ever seen on film. For that reason alone, it has the power to touch us deeply.

This film is available from New Line Cinema, 121 University Place, New York 10203.■

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National Organization for Women
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*This is by no means a complete
list. A more comprehensive
periodical listing appears in V2:4,
page 64.



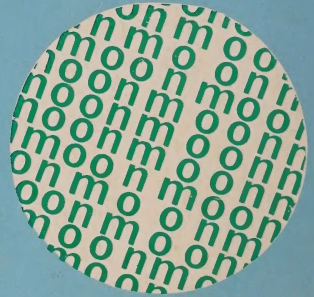
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Dave Barry
Humor

Let V-chip decide what you watch

The V-chip. A helpful tool for concerned parents? A threat to the First Amendment? An excuse for sentences without verbs?

These are some of the questions raised by the new federal law that will require television sets to contain a little computer thing called a V-chip (the "V" stands for "some word that begins with 'V'").

I bet I know what your reaction was when you heard about the V-chip. You said: "If the government is going to force TV manufacturers to do something, why not force them to go back to having just two big, easy-to-operate knobs, the way it was on the icebox-sized black-and-white RCA Victor TV that my family had when I was a boy growing up in the 1950s watching Ed Sullivan present accordion-playing bears?"

That was my reaction, too. But the V-chip is a sincere effort by Congress to enable concerned Americans — Americans exactly like you, only less intelligent — to imagine that Congress has actually done something about TV violence and smut.

Fishing programs, too

Here's how it will work:

1) Every TV program will be rated for both violence and smut, even those Saturday morning programs that consist entirely of men in baseball caps catching bass. So if they merely CATCH the bass, that would get a low rating; but if they were to commit an act of violence with the bass, or for some perverted reason slip the bass inside their wading pants, that would get a higher rating. The ratings will be published, thereby ensuring that...

2) ...millions of young people will try to tune into the programs containing the most violence and smut, however...

3) ...the V-chip inside the TV will constantly monitor the incoming signals, and the instant it detects anything obscene, such as a naked breast or Sen. Jesse Helms, it will automatically switch to a channel showing wholesome educational programming, such as a nature documentary about eels, unless of course...

4) ...the eels have naked breasts, in which case the V-chip will show commercials for competing long-distance telephone companies until the young people are driven, screaming, from the house.

We're concerned

Clearly, the V-chip is a good idea — in fact, we in the newspaper industry have voluntarily decided to adopt it. There's a tiny V-chip installed in the page you're reading right now! So if I try to write a smutty phrase such as "XXXX," or "XXXX-XXXX," or "get a load of the XXXX on that XXXX," the offensive parts are automatically deleted. The same goes for violence: Whole entire stories on Bosnia will be missing. That's how concerned we are about this XXXX issue.

Dave Barry is a humor columnist for The Miami Herald. Write to him at Tropic Magazine, The Miami Herald, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla. 33132.

In some denominations, the woman's role in the church has evolved to new liturgical heights. Episcopal women are bishops and priests, such as the Rev. Teresa Leifur at St. Monica's Episcopal Church in Cantonment.



Gary McCracken/News Journal photographer

The Rev. Teresa Leifur of St. Monica's Episcopal Church in Cantonment elevates the host during the celebration of the Eucharist. The parish is her first assignment as a priest after being ordained in January. She's the only female priest within a 50-mile radius. "...in this diocese, we still need to learn how to incorporate women into the existing structure," she says.

MAKE WAY FOR DINOSAURS

Thrill-seekers will enjoy Jurassic Park — The Ride, opening at a California theme park in May /8E

O.J. STILL IN NEWS

Christopher Darden and Alan Dershowitz put their spins on the trial of the century /5E

POP-UP BOOKS MAKE COMEBACK

They were popular before computers, and they're even more in vogue today /4E

Sisterhood of faith

The role of women role in religion is evolving to include leadership

By Alice Crann
News Journal staff writer

Nestled in a quiet Cantonment neighborhood sits St. Monica's Episcopal Church, the small parish where the Rev. Teresa Leifur faces her first assignment as a priest.

She's the only female priest within a 50-mile radius, and her position is part-time and temporary.

"I don't feel like I've been tucked away — with any new practice one is not sure what to do," says Leifur, who was ordained in January on her 51st birthday.

"But in this diocese, we still need to learn how to incorporate women into the existing structure."

"I've been to a number of church gatherings — conventions and guest lectures — where all the principal people involved were male."

Women's role in the church has evolved to new liturgical heights. Episcopal women are priests and bishops; Assemblies of God women serve as pastors; Jewish women are rabbis, and Jewish girls and women celebrate bat mitzvahs; Catholic girls now serve as altar girls.

But, even though women have made great strides in the church, they have not come as far as some would like, says Dr. Jane Dysart, who teaches women's history at the University of West Florida.

"(In the past), the woman was supposed to stay at home, raise children and do good works. There are people who still believe that's all a woman is supposed to do."

'Women's work'

Historically, men dominated the church until the 1830s when a shift occurred because of urbanization, Dysart says. As middle-class families became more affluent and hired domestic help, women started doing church work, which was considered an extension of their nurturing role, she says. Church tasks expanded to include missionary and social work.

"And, according to 19th-century mentality, women were more pious, more naturally inclined to be religious," Dysart says. "They carried the burden of managing a spiritual life for the family."

That's still projected today through Sunday school and altar guilds."

Biblical takes

Some religions resist change because of tradition; some simply won't change, period, Dysart says. Most often, denominations rely heavily on their interpretation of God's word to define the woman's role in their respective churches, she says.

"Are you a literalist, a fundamentalist?" Dysart asks. "If so, then everything is fixed for you. You don't have to worry about it."

"If you aren't, you use your reason. You look at the Bible, scholarship and reason. When you look at the Bible as you would any other text, and that scares conservatives, then you have to say there is more than one possibility here."

Steve Brown, a member of St. Monica's, says, "I'm all for women becoming priests. Some people are resistant to change, but I am not."

"There is nothing in the scriptures that says women cannot become priests. Sometimes a problem with acceptance stems from not being comfortable with something new. This is the second church I've belonged to that has (had) a female priest."

More women than men

In the African Methodist Episcopal Church, women run the house of the Lord in many roles — including as ministers and bishops.

"Women can do anything they want in our church, and if it wasn't for women in the church there wouldn't be a church," says Allie Mae Campbell, 78, a member of Bethel A.M.E.

See WOMEN, 7E



Dysart



Campbell

No time to eat? High-protein liquid drinks may be answer

By Reon Carter
Gannett News Service

Eat, drink and be merry has been modified for the '90s: Drink, drink and be healthy.

At least that's the idea behind the high-protein liquid meals that crowd store shelves: Ensure, Sustacal, Nutra Start, Resource and the latest, Boost.

These shake-like concoctions (similar to weight-loss drinks like Ultra Slim Fast and Sweet Success), are touted as complete and balanced nutrition and the answer for everyone from harried

HEALTH

young professionals too busy to chew to retirees who want to put more pep in their step.

No longer just for the overweight or infirm, sucking your meals from a can or drink box is the latest trend on the quick-fix road to better health.

According to Information Resource Inc., a Chicago-based marketing research firm, for the year ending Dec. 3, 1995, sales of Ensure shot up 52.1 percent. For

the same time period the sales were also up for Sustacal (25 percent) and Sustacal Plus (51.4 percent). Boost was introduced in October, but had already racked up \$5.2 million in sales by early December.

The trade journal Supermarket News reports that sales also rocketed 80 percent in the year ending Aug. 31, placing annual sales of these drinks at \$200 million.

Registered dietician Joan Horbiak, consultant to Mead Johnson Nutritionals, the company that gave us Boost and Sustacal, specializes in creating nutrition

programs for people on the go.

Horbiak says of the trend: "People skip breakfast. Before dinner, they might have the kids at soccer, ballet lessons, car pools, or just running errands. They might get one mega meal a day — a late dinner. People are looking for real-world solutions."

The nutrition energy drinks have been positioned as a more healthful alternative to not eating or grabbing the ever-convenient junk food.

What's in these elixirs? While the formulations vary from

drink to drink, the basic ingredients are typically water, oils, sugar, minerals and vitamins, milk or soy protein and artificial flavors.

Calories range from 200 to 250 per serving (8 to 11 ounces). Protein, carbohydrate and fat contents also differ slightly. Flavors are usually the standard strawberry, chocolate and vanilla. Cost \$1 to \$1.50 per can.

Activity level, weight, age and personal taste should be considered when deciding which drink will best suit your nutritional needs, Horbiak says.

BEST BETS

■ The Miami String Quartet, 4 p.m. today, Christ Church, Wright and Palafox streets. Details: 432-5118.

■ My Fair Lady, 3 p.m. today, BETA Children's Theatre, Egin Parkway, Fort Walton Beach. The play features Karl Bochman and Megan Edwards as Eliza Doolittle, Andrew Pangle as Professor Higgins, Matt Simpson as Col. Pickering and Major Ronnie Edwards as Alfred Doolittle. Michelle Kerrigan directs. Tickets are \$5. Details: 904-863-BETA.

ON THE MENU

AGGIE'S BEACH CLUB DELI
16495 Perdido Key Drive, 492-3514

Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m., daily. Stays open later on busy days. Owner: Beth Touart.

Specialty: Located near the beaches on Perdido Key, 1 1/2 miles east of Flora-Bama Lounge, Aggie's has been a favorite of the locals for more than a decade. In its advertisements it promotes its shrimp salad as "the best in Pensacola." Being a deli, the restaurant features sandwiches — the Reubens and clubs are favorites — along with homemade soups that are the daily specials. Deli meals also are sold by the pound. Customers will find Aggie's weekend specials — \$4 sandwiches — economical. Grilled barbecue chicken and ribs also are on the menu. Personal watercrafts can be rented at Aggie's.

Quote: "What makes people come back to Aggie's is that everybody kind of knows everybody," Touart says.

Where do you enjoy eating? Nominate your favorite restaurant and request a recipe. Submit nominations to: GetLife, P.O. Box 12716, Pensacola, FL 32574.



TOP BOOKS

USA TODAY's book listings include: This week's rank (last week's rank), book and author, publisher and price.

- (5) Egg Monsters From Mars by R.L. Stine. (F) P, Scholastic, \$3.99.
- (1) Primary Colors by Anonymous. (F) H, Random House, \$24.
- (new) Blood Sport by James B. Stewart. (NF) H, Simon and Schuster, \$25.
- (4) Night In Werewolf Woods by R.L. Stine. (F) P, Scholastic, \$3.99.
- (3) Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson. (F) P, Vintage, \$12.
- (6) Men Are From Mars, Women

Are From Venus by John Gray. (NF) H, HarperCollins, \$23.

7. (11) Star Wars: Before the Storm by Michael P. Kube-McDowell. (F) P, Bantam by Spectra, \$5.99.

8. (4) The Rainmaker by John Grisham. (F) P, Island Books, \$7.99.

9. (18) Autumn Lover by Elizabeth Lowell. (F) P, Avon, \$6.50.

10. (8) The Glass Lake by Maeve Binchy. (F) P, Dell, \$7.50.

Reporting stores include: B. Dalton Bookseller, Barnes and Noble Inc., Books-A-Million and Bookland, Borders Books and Music, Bookstar, Bookstop, Brentano's and Waldenbooks.

LIFE

Cantonment girl becomes new Cinderella baby

Alonna Simone Chastang was crowned Cinderella baby, over-all winner, in the 0- to 11-month-old age group.

She is the daughter of Doug and Lynn Chastang and the granddaughter of Paula Austin of Cantonment, Lucille Chastang of Pensacola and Pelham Chastang of Bay Minette, Ala.

She is the great-granddaughter of Paul and Martha Massey of Cantonment.

ALUMNAE TO MEET: The Kappa Alpha Theta Alumnae Club will have its Founders' Day luncheon Saturday at Austin Beach Officers Club, NAS Pensacola. "Pensacola area Theta alumnae are encouraged to attend whether or not they are now members of the local alumnae club," says Nancy Englander. Reservations are required by



Donna Freckmann
Town Talk

Monday, and can be made by calling **Garnier Minnich** at 494-1047 or Englander at 479-1108.

LOCALS ENTERTAIN: The Elderhostel Program sponsored by Pensacola Junior College entertained members with local talent.

Maureen Henry and Jack Brooking read poems depicting the early days of Pensacola and Milton.

Don Parker gave a humorous account of several incidents from his days as a law enforcement officer and **Faye Roberts** did a monologue from the play, "Bye Bye Birdie."

Ginger Christensen, the on-site coordinator, talked about the Elderhostel program and its purpose to introduce the members

to the cities they visit.

In the PJC Elderhostel program with **Gaspere Tamburello** serving as administrator, **Dr. Margo Stringfield** lectured about Pensacola archaeology and **John Appleyard** about the history of Pensacola.

Dr. Randall Broston conducted a tour of Seville Square, the Pensacola Cultural Center and the North Hill district.

Visitors also toured with **Capt. Scott Herrick** through the Naval Aviation Museum.

LEADERSHIP CHANGE: **Andrea DeWitt** has resigned as president of the League of Women Voters of the Pensacola Bay Area. **Sharon Barnett** will serve as president for the rest of the year.

TEEN A FINALIST: **Brittany Rasmussen** has been selected as one of the 40 finalists nationwide in **TEEN Magazine's** 1996 Miss Teenage America program.

Chosen from more than 10,000 entries, these talented teens all excel in the areas of leadership, community service, academic

achievement and general awareness.

The field was narrowed from 200 semifinalists based on their responses to questions relating to their home, school life and goals.

Good luck to Rasmussen, who — if selected — will participate in National Finals Week for an expense-paid week of photo-shoots, sight-seeing, interviews and press events.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS: On March 30, the Milton E. Hartsell Garden Club will have a Spring Flower Show from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at the home of **Dr. and Mrs. Ed Hartsell**, 202 Berryhill Rd. in Milton and at the Milton Garden Center, 100 Alabama St. Admission is free. Details: 623-8377.

The News Journal invites all readers to contribute special events or notes. Write to Town Talk, Pensacola News Journal, P.O. Box 12710, Pensacola, FL 32574.

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North Carolina researchers ask for assistance

Anson County (N.C.) genealogists are busy gathering material for a book about their heritage, and wish to enlist our help.

The publication will contain histories of past and present-day families, along with other interesting articles about the county.

Genealogists who have traced their ancestors back to Anson County are encouraged to contribute their research toward this effort.

Anson County has a rich history, dating back to 1750, when it was formed from old Bladen County.

In 1842, the western half of the county was added to a portion of Mecklenburg, to form Union County.

Although the Anson County Courthouse burned in 1868, many important records survived,



Janice Palmer
Southern Roots

including probate records from 1750, Civil Court records from 1770, and divorce records from 1868.

To receive a free brochure about the proposed book, send a long self-addressed, stamped envelope to Anson Book Committee, P.O. Box 2194, Rockingham, N.C. 28380-2194.

WIRED: Computer genealogists with Georgia roots will be inter-

ested to know the "Roster of Confederate Soldiers of Georgia," published by the State of Georgia, is now available on computer disks.

The six-volume set was compiled by Lillian Henderson and sells for \$89.95 (plus \$2.75 postage).

To order HE-4, specify: CD or multiple floppy disks, and Windows or DOS.

Write to Boyd Publishing Company, P.O. Box 367, Milledgeville, Ga. 31061.

SEEKING INFORMATION: Horace A. Henderson is looking for traces of his ancestor Saul (not Samuel) Norris, who emigrated from Ireland in 1812 and settled in Florida.

Two of Saul's sons, Daniel and

S.S. Norris moved to Louisiana and Texas.

If you have any information, contact Horace A. Henderson, 421 Hines Lane, Pineville, La. 71350 or phone 318-640-8877.

SIDE NOTE: In 1810 and 1812, the United States annexed portions of West Florida to Louisiana and the Mississippi Territory.

Early settlers were predominantly Irish, according to the Handy Book for Genealogists.

Janice Palmer's Southern Roots column appears Sundays in the Pensacola News Journal. Send queries and announcements (three weeks in advance, please), to Southern Roots, c/o Life Section, Pensacola News Journal, P.O. Box 12710, Pensacola, FL 32574.

California mayor offers his solution to poverty

Dear Ann Landers: I wonder how many readers besides myself resent being bombarded by the media with requests for financial help.

One pitch that caught my eye was particularly irritating.

In an attempt to pull at the heartstrings of soft-hearted readers, a newspaper story told of Mr. X, who has been out of work for two years with a back injury and stays at home with his seven children, while Mrs. X goes to work at her minimum-wage job.

Please note that there are seven children in the family and five were born within the last five years.

In my opinion, Miss Landers, there is nothing wrong with Mr. X's back.

Rather, it is Mr. X's front that seems to be the problem.

Instead of giving him financial help, I would like to pledge \$1,000 of my personal funds to pay for Mr. X's vasectomy, should he consent to the procedure.

I am signing my name to this



Ann Landers
Advice

letter, and you have my permission to print it. — **Steven Gourley, mayor of Culver City, Calif.**

Dear Readers: I phoned Mayor Steven Gourley of Culver City and asked if he was sure he wanted me to print his letter.

His response was "Absolutely, that's why I wrote it."

I then pointed out that it might damage his chances for re-election.

Hizzoner replied, "That's OK. I am not planning to run again."

So, all you aspirants for the mayor's office of Culver City, Calif., should be aware that the job will be open when Gourley's term expires in April.

Dear Ann Landers:

You hit a nerve (mine) when you said in a recent column that cats do not annoy their neighbors. I disagree with you, Ann.

The cats around here annoy me a lot.

1. They stalk and kill the beautiful wild birds that come to my feeder and my birdbath.

2. They climb all over my car and leave scratches.

3. They have ruined every lovely garden in this neighborhood.

Obviously, you've never heard a cat screeching in the middle of the night. I have, and it's a hideous sound.

I live in a condominium complex that has a rule about pets running loose.

Dog owners obey this rule, but the cat people ignore it.

I have no desire to start a war between dog and cat lovers.

All I want is a little consideration as a bird lover, and I would certainly appreciate a good night's sleep. — **Lakeland, Fla.**

Dear Lakeland:

Cat lovers, dog lovers and bird

lovers all have devoted supporters, and like you, I have no intention of choosing sides. Have you tried earplugs at night? They work.

P.S.:

Cat owners should know that these pets are safer indoors, and if they are neutered, they will not howl, fight or want to roam.

Dear Ann Landers: I recently moved into a lovely condominium. Everything is perfect, but I now have a new phone number and am being pestered by a heavy breather who doesn't speak.

Last night, he called six times. The phone company says it can't help me. Can you? — **N.Y., N.Y.**

Dear N.Y.: You can solve your problem by spending less than a dollar.

Buy a whistle, and blast the caller's ear off.

That will do it.

Syndicated columnist Ann Landers offers advice daily in the News Journal. Write to Ann Landers, Creator's Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Take a stand against pet over-population, abuse

By **Dr. Jim Randolph**
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

All of us want to do what's best for our own animals and for animals in general.

We have wants and desires for ourselves, too, and sometimes the two principles conflict.

For example, traditionally, if we have a dog that is behaviorally because of size, behavior and temperament, we want her to "just have one litter" before she's spayed, "so we can keep one of her puppies."

The problem, of course, is that she doesn't have just "one."

If your dog has (or fathers) puppies, it takes up homes that humane society puppies might have had.

PET DOCTOR

In fact, the "one puppy" that you wanted to keep could have been a humane society puppy.

You actually save two lives for every birth you prevent.

In just one shelter, the Humane Society of South, Mississippi, 12,000 animals a year are put to sleep.

That happens because of indiscriminate breeding of both wild and owned dogs and cats, combined with the lack of sufficient homes in which to place all those animals.

Multiply those local numbers by a nationwide epidemic, and a shocking statistic arises: About 12

million cats and dogs a year lose their lives to euthanasia.

That's a lot of deaths.

Continuing on the subject of animal welfare, let's talk about animal abuse.

Abuse can take a number of forms, from animals being physically beaten to being deprived of food, water and/or shelter. If you see any of these forms of abuse, report them to law enforcement officials or local humane society personnel.

There may be nothing more for you to do from there. Often, it may merely take a bit of education for pet owners to realize they're not doing what needs to be done for a pet's basic needs.

Said Frances Pike, president of

the SPCA of Diamondhead, Miss., "Often, public pressure results in changed behavior toward the pet."

If the desired change doesn't occur, though, legal intervention may be necessary.

That's the time to forget the old excuse, "I don't want to get involved," and be a participant, by filing charges.

You may be the only advocate that the abused pet has.

Take a stand.

Make a difference.

Dr. Jim Randolph is a veterinarian at Animal General Hospital in Long Beach, Miss. Do you have a question about your pet? Write to the pet doctors at the South Mississippi Veterinary Medical Association, 20005 Pineville Road, Long Beach, MS 39560.

TODAY'S HOROSCOPE

JOYCE JILLSON

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Finish old projects before doing something new. A trial separation ends, bringing great joy. Temporary living arrangements turn out to be permanent. Be careful of promises that can come back to haunt you. Read the fine print.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Refuse to let others tell you how to handle your life. Joint activities are fun, but for-profit work done alone is the luckiest. A friend is secretly in love with a partner. Last-ditch efforts to get funding succeed.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Sensational luck comes when you follow a dream. Stop analyzing your life, love and work, and get moving. A chance meeting leads to a marvelous offer. Stop procrastinating, and move on a goal.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Jumpstart a relationship by changing the rules this week. At work, stand up for your rights. Unions help you out. Retirees must fight to attain rights. Consolidating bills eventually saves you money. Disregard intrigue.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Make allowances for family members who soon will respond more appropriately. Someone of power senses your potential — don't be overly modest. Luck comes when you share financial data. Romance is less thrilling.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Show a bit of vulnerability and others will rush to your aid. Get rid of clutter, including people who no longer support your high-minded efforts. The more you socialize, the more confidence you gain regarding a new career.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Present yourself as if you had the most important meeting in the world. First impressions count. Spend time on how things look. Rivals disappear when you show stamina. Co-workers may try to hurt you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Chance encounters lead to renewed ambitions. Listen to relatives who back up your suggestions with money. Repeat dates and appointment times or others will blame you for errors. You suddenly get the upper hand.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You are simply irresistible. Use this cloud. Romantic trappings bring you and your love closer together. Don't compromise. Complaints bring refunds. A teen deserves your backing.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Incredible luck comes from large corporations, institutions or wealthy benefactors. Hire help — you'll never progress until you learn to delegate. Expand businesses. Invest in new technology. Promote yourself.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Financial help from in-laws or distant relatives convince them they can dictate your actions. Set the record straight. Exhibit your talents — friends are unaware of your diversity. Expect job offers and key assignments.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Stay out of family feuds. An assumption about a current love is not quite accurate. Ask direct questions this evening. Investors, designers and artists find a receptive audience. Tackle insurance or tax problems.

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LIFE

Women sharing duties of ministry in varied religions

FROM 1E

Church, who has held many church positions — including adviser to the Pulpit Aid Board, church trustee, supervisor of the Sunday school department and treasurer of the Senior Missionaries Society.

"In the Bible, it says women were the first to meet Christ at the tomb when he rose from the dead. They went and told the men. We believe women can tell the story just like men, and many women are doing quite well."

The church would crumble without women leading, says the Rev. W.E. McNeely, pastor of Bethel A.M.E.

"We have about 600 members and the women represent about 80 percent of our membership," he says. "In our church, we believe there is no male or female roles in God's work. We are one."

Judy Fisher, 51, recalls having just two male Sunday school teachers in her entire life.

"The future holds great opportunities for women in the Assemblies of God," says the Baywood Assembly of God member and representative of the Women's Ministries for Section I of the West Florida District of Assemblies of God.

"I see women becoming greater leaders in our organization because they are allowed to be certified, licensed or ordained pastors and because the church is stressing educational (Bible) training for all people who hold district positions."

The Assemblies of God denomination believes the Bible is the inspired word of God, that God created Eve to be a helpmate for Adam. And that can mean being called to lead and spread God's word, Fisher says.

"Being a helpmate doesn't mean walking behind," Campbell says. "It can mean walking side-by-side. It can mean leading."

"Women do have leadership ability, and we see things differently than men, but really, we don't want to take over," Campbell adds. "We just want to share."

Tackling tradition
Traditions are difficult to break, says Peg McElroy, a Eucharist minister who helps priests at Cathedral of the Sacred Heart deliver communion and instructs students taking the Right of Christian Initiation for Adults class, which helps Catholics learn more about their faith.

"There are reasons we have certain traditions, but traditions are man-made," she says. "I think they will change, slowly."

"One day, I will see deaconesses in the Catholic church, but I don't think I'll see a woman ordained as a Catholic priest — not in my lifetime. The church is very cautious."

McElroy says she doesn't feel slighted.

"My primary belief is we can all minister in the church without being an ordained priest," she says. "I get so much joy from my involvement with the church I can't imagine not doing it. The people at church are my best friends, my role models, the people that I help teach."

Women today are treated equally in Reform Judaism, which started allowing women to become rabbis in the early '70s, says Lucille Foley, an active member of Temple Beth El for 29 years. Women represent about 60 percent of the Temple Board of Trustees, which has 15 members, she says.

And the bat mitzvah — a ceremony for 13-year-old girls that's analogous to that of the bar mitzvah

for 13-year-old boys — is now being offered to adult women who feel they missed out on the opportunity as girls.

"In 1973, my daughters were in the first group of girls to celebrate their commitment to Judaism with a bat mitzvah at Temple Beth El, and more recently, April 3, 1992, I was in the first group of women to celebrate with a bat mitzvah."

Foley says she was studying Hebrew with three other women, under the instruction of Rabbi David E. Ostrich, when she and the others decided they wanted a bat mitzvah.

"After studying Hebrew, which is difficult, we made our commitments," she says. "The bat mitzvah made me feel great that I could share my dedication to Judaism with the congregation."

Foley, who's been involved in all aspects of Temple Beth El, says, "I'm most definitely a feminist. Women bring their expertise to the table — as well they should. In view of all we do in this congregation, the people can't help but respect us."

Scripture reigns
Within the Southern Baptist Convention, each church is autonomous, but in the Bible Belt, Baptist churches do not ordain

women, says Cindy Greene, a member of Pine Summit Baptist Church.

"We believe God's word is infallible, and it says the overseer, the elder is a man. It's not that we don't believe women can't be leaders — I am a very capable leader," says Teacher of the Year for 1995-96 in Santa Rosa County, who teaches music at East Milton Elementary and has held various church positions.

"Women are free to minister in whatever way God leads them, and women have become more involved in different ministries," Greene says. "We believe each person has at least one gift, and we are free to use these gifts."

Women at Pine Summit Baptist hold positions mostly as educators: Sunday school teachers, mission teachers, discipleship teachers, vacation Bible school teachers. Also, they are involved in the music ministry, can become shepherds — people who assist the deacons — and serve on various committees — personnel, budget and missions.

"I don't think it will ever change as far as ordaining women, but the woman's role in our church is evolving and will become more focused on family ministries,"

Greene says. "Something the church is going to have to face is dealing with AIDS, and I certainly do think women will play a major role in that."

"God made women caretakers, and I think we will lead the way."

Women can't become pastors in the Missouri Synod branch of the Lutheran church, but women serve on the church council, boards and committees, says Cynthia Green, Dean of Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Women's suffrage has come a long way in her denomination, she says. "During the first 120 years, women could not vote nor hold office," says Dean, who has cataloged about 1,200 books since 1983 in Immanuel Lutheran's library. "In the early days of this congregation, men sat on the east side and women and children sat on the left. And men went to communion first."

"In 1969, women were allowed to vote, and in 1973 at Immanuel women were allowed to serve on the church council and hold some offices as long as these positions were not directly involved in the special functions of the pastoral office — preaching, administering the sacraments — and not usurp authority over man."

Today, it's about the same.



Foley



Greene



Dean



Fisher

THE FRIST HUMANITARIAN AWARD

Opening New Windows

Sometimes in the midst of all the talk about healthcare, we can forget that healthcare is based in caring for people. The Frist Humanitarian Awards, named for HCA Founder Dr. Thomas Frist, were designed to recognize the extraordinary contributions made by employees and volunteers in delivering health care.

This year's local winners are perfect examples of that caring that goes beyond any job description to open new windows for patients and their families.

NANCY WILLCUTT, Volunteer



Nancy Willcutt knows a lot about opening new windows. A widow who has lost eight of her thirteen children, Nancy has also successfully battled two life-threatening illnesses. Through this adversity she recognized how grateful she was for the person who would stop and talk

a few minutes...the person who took the time to lift her spirits.

As a volunteer at Columbia West Florida Regional Medical Center, Nancy serves 40-50 hours a week as volunteer chaplain associate. She is on call 24-hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to conducting worship services—and even marriages—in the hospital, Nancy is with patients' families to lend support through crises.

When a gunshot victim was near death, Nancy helped the mother find hope in allowing the doctors to harvest her son's organs so that his death could bring life to another. When a teenage boy was in a coma for several weeks following an automobile accident, Nancy visited him, praying for his recovery. When he regained consciousness, he immediately said, "I know who you are. You're the lady who prayed for me so many times."

Nancy Willcutt has touched the lives of hundreds of patients and family members, helping them to open new windows in the midst of grave illness, serious injury and even death.

CAROL FIELD, RN

As a nurse in The Family Birthplace unit of Columbia West Florida Regional Medical Center, Carol sees a lot of happy new windows opening... and helps new parents cope with the new life they have been given.

Originally a postpartum/GYN nurse,



Carol has worked at WFRMC for more than 11 years. In the process she has learned a unique style of gentleness and firmness that helps steer her patients toward a quick recovery.

Carol carries her skills into the volunteer world as well. She provides counseling and support at the Alpha Center, a place where women and young girls with a crisis pregnancies can go for guidance, counseling and help with supplies such as maternity clothes and baby layettes.

Carol has opened new windows and touched the lives of many women...from mothers in shock over the birth of a Down's Syndrome child...to mothers who need breast feeding support. According to her friends and co-workers, Carol Field is a shining example of what being a mother-baby nurse is all about.

COLUMBIA West Florida Regional Medical Center

Bridal Guide

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French Quarter Festival should be in New Orleans travel plans

By Karen Harrell
News Journal staff writer

New Orleans is famous for its Mardi Gras celebration and annual Jazzfest, but few people realize that the "Vieux Carre" has its own party each year.

The French Quarter Festival, set

PACKED&READY

for April 12-14, was started in 1984 to bring locals back to the historic area disrupted by years of street and sidewalk repairs.

The event has grown and in-

cludes 100 hours of musical entertainment, the world's largest jazz brunch, fireworks over the Mississippi River and more.

For children, there are puppet shows, arts and crafts and more. The event is free. French Quarter Festival packages are available through Tours by Andrea

(800-535-2732) and Destination Management (800-366-8882). Details: 800-673-5725 or 504-522-5730.

MONEY CAMP: The posh Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach is offering an investment weekend

getaway just for women.

The first Money Camp for Women from May 9-12 will be directed by Susan K. Bradley, a certified financial planner.

Topics include ignoring media advice, de-mystifying the stock and bond markets, secrets of retirement planning and tax de-

fense. The camp costs \$995 per person, or \$1,800 for two from the same family.

Details: 407-655-6611 or 214-749-3278.

Karen Harrell is a free-lance writer based in Pensacola Beach.

Ride in Jurassic Park may be ultimate thrill

Knight-Ridder

LOS ANGELES — One of the subjects most near and dear to the hearts of Hollywood filmmakers is the process of filmmaking.

As a natural extension of this narcissistic industry, theme parks have been showcasing films and offering glimpses into the cinematic process for more than 40 years. Indeed, movies have provided the inspiration for a wide range of entertaining attractions, ranging from Disneyland's venerable Mad Tea Party to Universal Studio's new Waterworld: A Live Sea War Spectacular.

In late May, to stretch the incestuous connection even further, a popular Southern California theme park will introduce a thrill ride, which was based on a movie about a theme park.

Jurassic Park — the Ride will allow visitors to Universal Studios Hollywood to relive all the joy and terror experienced by Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum and Richard Attenborough in Steven Spielberg's 1993 blockbuster. At \$110 million — and more than five years in the making — the ride is as epic in scope as any movie conceived by Cecil B. DeMille.

Still under construction, Jurassic Park — the Ride is best appreciated today in scale-model form, although patrons can monitor progress from the giant escalator that straddles much of the 6½-acre site.

Without revealing too much of

the mystery, the cardboard-and-clay models describe an attraction that will combine the latest in animatronic technology with hydraulic physics and good, old-fashioned storytelling.

Dinosaurs great and small will inhabit a lushly forested lagoon, through which raftloads of amateur paleontologists will intrude at a potential rate of 3,000 per hour. Imagine Disneyland's classic Jungle Cruise as re-conceived by NASA engineers and Fred Flintstone.

Guests waiting in line to embark on watercraft will hear Dr. John Hammond — the billionaire founder of novelist Michael Crichton's ill-fated island amusement park — explain how "we had a few problems in Costa Rica, but have all the bugs worked out now."

These 25-person rafts will allow explorers to navigate the Herbivore Country lagoon, where they'll marvel at gentle 50-foot-high Utasaurus and a 40-foot-long stegosaurus. Unlike similar creatures found at the Wisconsin Dells, these dinosaurs can move in life-like patterns and react at high velocity if they perceive a threat to their babies.

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BRIEFS

FORT WALTON BEACH SEA-FOOD FESTIVAL, Fort Walton Beach, April 19 to 21: Seafaring is celebrated oldies-style with a vintage car show, '60s rock and roll, arts and crafts and savory seafood from shrimp on a stick to buckets of steamed crab claws. Details: 904-244-5319.

VIRGINIA HORSE FESTIVAL, Lexington, Va., April 19 to 21: Shop along vendor row, admire the equine art contest and learn something new at a clinic or seminar. Details: 540-463-2194.

WORLD GRITS FESTIVAL, St. George, S.C., April 19 to 21: Hot grits, warm and friendly people, loads of entertainment and no alcohol sales add up to a family-oriented festival. Call 803-563-3255.

TAOS SPRING ARTS CELEBRATION, Taos, N.M., April 19 to May 12: Taos burst forth with a major art show, performance art events and art openings. Call 800-732-TAOS.

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SCANDINAVIAN FESTIVAL, Thousand Oaks, Calif., April 20: National anthems, costumes, music, dancing, drama and smorgasboards are in the works. Call 805-493-3151.

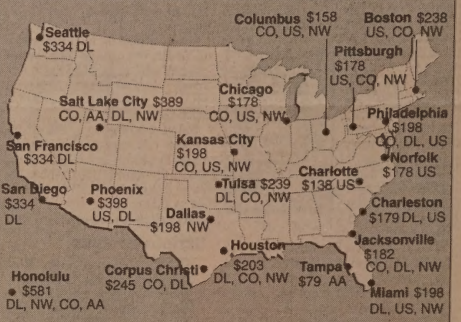
FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE LOUISIANE, Lafayette, La., April 23 to 28: This six-day fete celebrates the music, art, theater, dance, cinema and cuisine of Southern Louisiana and its French-speaking cultural cousins around the world. Call 318-232-8086.

RACKING HORSE SPRING CELEBRATION, Decatur, Ala., April 24 to 27: Family-oriented fun center on the racking horse, Alabama's state horse, which are trained to walk in a showy, high-stepping gait. Call 205-351-9242.

VIDALIA ONION FESTIVAL, Vidalia, Ga., April 25 to 28: A crowd of 70,000 is expected to enjoy the sweet aroma of the world-famous Vidalia onion. Call 912-538-8687.

Gannett News Service

Air fares and destinations



Certain rules and restrictions apply. This chart is intended only as a guide.

Airline abbreviation key AA American NW Northwest CO Continental US USAir DL Delta AW America West	
Week's best travel buy Pensacola to San Juan \$270	

Source: All fares round-trip from Pensacola researched 3/20 by MajesticTravel.

News Journal graphic

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